

THE AUSTRALIAN WORKERS UNION

CONFEDERATION OF AUSTRALIAN TRADE UNIONS

Official Report

ANNUAL CONFERENCE

HOLDEN HALL, MELB. IN FEBRUARY 1930

THE AUSTRALIAN WORKERS' UNION.

(WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED THE A.S.U., ESTABLISHED 1886; AND THE
G.L.U., ESTABLISHED 1890.)



OFFICIAL REPORT

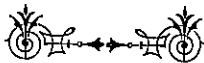
— OF THE —

T E N T H

Annual Conference,

— HELD IN —

BALLARAT (VIC.), IN FEBRUARY, 1896.



Sydney

“WORKER” OFFICE, 215 AND 217 PALMER STREET

1896

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AUSTRALIAN WORKERS' UNION.

Annual Conference.

FIRST DAY—SATURDAY, FEB. 1.

The Ninth Annual Conference of the above was opened in the Trades Hall, Ballarat (Vic.) on Saturday, Feb. 1.

The following delegates were present:—

Bourke Branch	Mr. D. Macdonell
Wagga Branch	„ Robt. M'Cook
Goulburn Branch	„ Jas. M'Inerney
Young Branch	„ J. M. Toomey
Scone Branch	„ F. J. Gilbert
Creswick (Vic.) Branch	„ D. Temple
Adelaide (S.A.) Branch	„ J. A. Cook
General Secretary	„ W. G. Spence.

Messrs. J. J. M'Carthy (Moree), G. A. Burgess (Coonamble), and John Reid (Casterton) were absent.

DECLARATION OF BALLOTS.

The General Returning-officer (Mr. J. C. Watson, M.P.) attended, and announced the results of the ballots for Executive Officers as follows: President, R. Sleath; Vice-President for New South Wales, Thos. White; Vice-President for Victoria, Jas. Slattery (unopposed); General Secretary, W. G. Spence; General Treasurer, D. Temple. He also announced the results of the general ballots taken on various questions of importance to members, detailed particulars of which are given elsewhere, together with the voting for the various candidates for the Executive offices.

PROTEST.

The General Secretary then read the following protest from the Bourke Branch against the President-elect taking his seat:—

A.W.U. Office, Bourke.

January 13, 1896.

That, in the opinion of this Annual Meeting of the Bourke Branch of the A.W.U., the action of Mr. R. Sleath, M.P., in regard to the £25 advanced by this Branch to the Wilcannia P.L.L., as evidenced by the correspondence published in the WORKER of the 4th inst., debars him, according to Rule 15, Section F, from holding any office in the A.W.U. until he practically admits his wrongdoing by unconditionally refunding that portion of the money claimed by this Branch, and that it hereby enters its protest against his return to any office in the A.W.U. should he be successful in the ballot. This meeting is further of opinion that, as members were not cognizant of Mr. Sleath's action concerning the money when voting, the Presidency should remain open until a fresh ballot can be taken, in the event of his being successful in the present one.

(Signed) THOS. WHITE, Chairman.
D. MACDONELL, Secretary.

Mr. Sleath, being declared elected President, took his seat, whereupon Mr. Macdonell protested against his doing so, and, after discussion, Mr. Sleath retired from the chair, and Mr. Watson (Returning-officer) was elected to the chair during the hearing of the Bourke Branch protest.

A resolution was moved that no report of the proceedings in connection with the Bourke protest be published, and an amendment that a full report of the whole matter be published. Both motion and amendment, after a short discussion, were defeated.

“THE WORKER.”

It was decided to proceed with the business in connection with the New South Wales WORKER newspaper on Saturday, the 8th inst., on which date the Managing Editor (Mr. Medway Day) would be present.

PORT AUGUSTA BRANCH.

It was decided that Mr. A. Poynton, M.P., of South Australia, be heard in connection with Port Augusta Branch matters when Branch Balance-sheets were considered on Monday, 10th inst.

ADJOURNMENT.

The delegates from Moree, Coonamble, and Casterton Branches not having arrived, it was decided to adjourn until the following Monday to give every opportunity to all those who would be called upon to vote of hearing the whole question debated.

Conference thereupon adjourned until 10 a.m. on Monday, the 3rd inst.

SECOND DAY—MONDAY, FEB. 3.

Conference opened at 10.15 a.m., the same delegates as attended on Saturday being present. Mr. Watson in the chair.

ADMISSION OF VISITORS.

Mr. M'Inerney moved, Mr. Gilbert seconded—
That until the ordinary business of Conference is taken up no visitors be admitted.
Mr. Sleath moved, Mr. Cook seconded—
That visitors other than members be excluded.
The amendment was carried.

BOURKE BRANCH PROTEST.

The Moree, Coonamble, and Casterton delegates not having arrived, Mr. Macdonell moved—

That the matter of Bourke Branch protest be postponed until Tuesday morning, and that in the meantime other business of a non-contentious character be proceeded with.

Mr. M'Cook seconded.

Mr. Spence pointed out that there was a good deal of business of a preliminary character to go through, and suggested that, in order to avoid any unpleasantness, the ex-President, Mr. Rae, who was present, should take the chair.

Mr. Sleath protested against delay in dealing with the Bourke protest, and desired it to be dealt with at once.

Mr. M'Inerney moved—

That Conference adjourn until the following day.

He did not believe that any good work could be done until the important question affecting the position of the President had been disposed of, and he thought we could depend upon a full attendance by the following morning.

Mr. Temple seconded Mr. M'Inerney's amendment.

Mr. Macdonell then withdrew his motion, and it was decided to again adjourn until 10 a.m. on Tuesday.

THIRD DAY—TUESDAY, FEB. 4.

Conference resumed business at 9.30 a.m., Mr. J. C. Watson, M.P., in the chair. Messrs. J. J. M'Carthy (Moree), G. A. Burgess (Coonamble), and J. Reid (Casterton) were present, in addition to the other delegates.

BOURKE BRANCH PROTEST.

The discussion of the Bourke Branch protest was commenced and continued throughout the day, and was not concluded when Conference adjourned at 6 p.m.

Ex-President Rae, who was present on behalf of the WORKER, took notes of the whole discussion, but it was decided that they should not be published for the present, Conference to decide later as to what statement should be made public.

FOURTH DAY—WEDNESDAY, FEB. 5.

Conference re-assembled at 9.30 a.m. All delegates present. Mr. Watson, M.P., in the chair.

BOURKE BRANCH PROTEST.

The debate on the Bourke Branch protest was resumed, and at its conclusion a motion was passed as follows—

That this Conference is of opinion that the protest of the Bourke Branch against Mr. Sleath is not justifiable, inasmuch as he is in no way a defaulter to that Branch, and, furthermore, they consider that he (Mr. Sleath) is fully entitled to take his seat as President at once.

A motion by Mr. Macdonell—

That Mr. Sleath be asked to make good or withdraw certain imputations upon the Bourke Branch officials, which he quoted from the published correspondence, was put and lost.

Prior to Mr. Sleath taking the chair, Mr. Macdonell handed in a written protest against the decision of Conference on the matter of the Bourke Branch protest, which was entered on the minutes.

Mr. Macdonell announced that for the reasons stated he must refuse on behalf of his Branch to acknowledge Mr. Sleath as President of the A. W. U., and would now withdraw from the Conference; but when the Branch Balance-sheets were under consideration, he would attend, and would be most happy to answer any questions delegates might ask regarding the financial position of the Bourke Branch.

THANKS TO RETURNING-OFFICER.

A hearty vote of thanks to the Returning-officer (Mr. Watson) for his services as Chairman was then carried by acclamation.

STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE.

The consideration of general business was entered upon by the appointment of a Standing Orders Committee, consisting of Messrs. Gilbert, M'Inerney, M'Carthy, and Burgess.

Conference adjourned at 12.30 p.m., and resumed at 2 p.m. All the delegates present excepting Mr. D. Macdonell.

BOURKE BRANCH PROTEST

A motion—

That Mr. Macdonell's protest be received,
was carried.

The President asked if Conference desired to deal further with Mr. Macdonell's protest, as, if not, he would proceed with other business.

Mr. Gilbert (Scone) thought that with a small Conference like this it was very undesirable that any Branch, particularly a large and important Branch like Bourke, should be disfranchised, and the Conference lose the services of its delegate. He did not desire Conference to back down from its decision, but would move—

That a deputation of three be appointed to ask Mr. Macdonell to reconsider his decision.

Mr. R. M'Cook (Wagga) seconded the motion, and suggested Messrs. Spence, Temple, and M'Carthy to form the deputation, to which the mover agreed.

Mr. J. A. Cook (Adelaide) protested against the Conference doing anything of the sort. Mr. Macdonell had by his own act disfranchised his Branch, and could re-enter the Conference whenever he liked. If he declined to do so, let his Branch deal with him.

Mr. J. Reid (Casterton) also objected, as he thought it would establish a bad precedent. He did not believe in any man withdrawing and refusing to accept the will of the majority, and he had been told that other delegates had previously acted in a similar manner, which he much deprecated.

Mr. Sleath (President) did not desire to take any part in the discussion beyond stating that Mr. Macdonell's protest was a reflection upon Conference, and it must be understood that he could only be asked to return on the understanding that Conference did not intend to go back upon its previous action.

Mr. Burgess (Coonamble) supported the proposal, as although the Conference had decided against the views expressed by Mr. Macdonell, they recognized the valuable assistance he could render them in dealing with the many important questions to be discussed, and he (Mr. Burgess) considered it most desirable to effect an amicable settlement if possible.

Mr. Gilbert, in reply, pointed out that his proposal was not in the interests of Mr. Macdonell, but of the members of the Bourke Branch, which was a large one and financially the strongest in the Union.

The resolution was then put and lost on division—

For—	Against—
Mr. Gilbert	Mr. Toomey
Burgess	Temple
M'Cook	Cook
M'Inerney	Reid
	M'Carthy

HOURS OF SITTING.

The Standing Orders Committee reported that they had agreed to recommend that the hours of sitting commence at 10 o'clock in the morning, as several delegates lived at Creswick, and arrived by train at that hour, and to sit until 6 p.m., with an interval for dinner from 12.30 to 2 p.m.; that the nature of the report of Conference to be published in WORKER and afterwards issued to members be decided first, after which questions number 4, 5, and 7 be discussed, and then the questions relating to proposed reduction of Branches be dealt with.

BRANCH BALANCE-SHEETS.

On the motion of Messrs. Cook and Gilbert, consideration of Branch Balance-sheets was postponed until the following Monday.

REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS.

Mr. F. J. Gilbert (Scone) moved—

That a fairly full report of all business done since President Sleath resumed his seat be published in the WORKER, and that the General Secretary be authorized to supply the public press with a summary, as in previous years.

Mr. M'Carthy (Moree) seconded if the mover would consent to add that a sub-Committee be appointed to revise report for WORKER.

The mover consented, and Messrs. J. A. Cook, J. M. Toomey, and Robert M'Cook were named as a Revision Committee, and the motion was carried.

GENERAL SECRETARY'S REPORT.

The Annual Report of the General Secretary was then read, as follows:—

TO MEMBERS,—

As you are aware, the previous season was one of serious strikes against the Pastoralists' Union's action in repudiating the compact entered into in 1891. The result proved so disastrous to both sides that we thought that reason would have again guided the Councils of the P.U., and that they would have been prepared to arrange for terms of peace.

In keeping with the policy followed by us ever since the inception of the Shearers' Union—namely, that of exhausting all means of settlement before entering upon any strike, however justifiable—an early effort was made to secure a conference. On the 14th January, 1895, your General Secretary wrote to the P.U., and asked for a reply by the 14th February. No reply came to hand, and during the sitting of our Convention a telegram was sent to Whitely King, and on the 27th February that gentleman forwarded a definite reply on behalf of the P.U., in which they declined to make any change from the 1894 policy.

As an effort has been made by the P.U. leaders to cause the public to infer that our Report was issued prior to the refusal of the P.U. to meet us in conference, it is necessary to state that, as a matter of fact, the Report was not even submitted to our Convention until after the P.U. had definitely refused to meet us. The Report was purposely held back so as not to prejudice our chances of conference, and was only adopted and published when there was no hope of conciliatory steps meeting with success.

The leading officers of the P.U. have since then further attempted to mislead the public and their own members by falsely stating that a "manifesto" was issued by the A.W.U. after our Convention. Mr. W. E. Abbott, as chairman of the annual meeting of the P.U. in Sydney, stated: "The Council of this Union, on the publication of that manifesto, promptly resolved that they could not hold any further communication with men so utterly dishonest and untruthful as those who were responsible for its authorship and publication, and intimated the same to the leaders of the Australian Workers' Union, and through the press to the public."

In this address, Mr. Abbott uses the term "manifesto" no less than seven times, and the above quotation proves that he intended all readers of his address to infer that the alleged manifesto was the reason for their not meeting us, when the fact is that the refusal came prior to our Report—which they try to change into a manifesto—was issued. That this attempt at a justification of action which they could not defend was a deliberate one is further proved by the fact that the chairman of the P.U. meeting held in Melbourne simultaneously with that in Sydney made almost exactly the same statement. It is also well to mention that a gentleman in Sydney attempted to negotiate a settlement, and waited upon Mr. Rae, who offered to have anything objectionable in the Report removed. The P.U. refused to confer on any conditions, which shows the hollowness of the statements made by Abbott and Co.

No manifesto was issued, as all our members know, but Convention resolved upon asking members to refuse work under the '94 P.U. agreement, and to uphold the '91 terms as to agreement and price of shearing. These were the instructions to members; but during the following months of March and April, Branch officers became aware of the fact that members were securing stands on P.U. terms, and were not prepared in anything like unanimity to continue the fight of the previous year. Very many advocated strikes in order that they could the more readily secure work whilst better men were holding out for Union terms.

The Union was not in a position to form camps and carry out a fight, owing to the heavy drain upon its finances during the previous year. A special meeting of representatives from every Branch was held on May 2 and following days, at which the whole position was gone into. It was found impossible to effectively carry out a general strike, and so it was decided that members should be given a free hand so far as agreement was concerned, but they were asked to uphold the Union price of 20s. per 100 for shearers and 25s. minimum weekly wage for shed hands. A manifesto was published setting forth some of the reasons for the change of tactics.

The season proved to be a very dry one, and consequently in favor of those members who were prepared to uphold Union rates and demand the '91 agreement. Many of those, however, who were loudest in denouncing the Executive Council were the most ready to accept the P.U. terms without making the slightest attempt to secure the more just conditions of the '91 agreement. The great falling off in our aggregate membership proves how large a percentage of those who obtained the work were utterly devoid of Union principle, and are of the class who care nothing for any good movement, but would rather spend a pound in beer than contribute ten shillings to improve the lot of themselves and their fellow men. Of course, as is usual with scabs, excuses are made by them; but as no true Unionist ever shirks the small contribution necessary for the maintenance of the organization which is his only protection, no excuse made is worthy of notice. It is gratifying to find that a large number stood true to their principles and formed the bulwark

against the sweeping reductions in price, the raddling second price, and robbery in the ration list, courted by the shearer who declines to maintain the Union which removed those injustices nine years ago, and has staved them off ever since.

As might be expected from the fact of so many P.U. anti-Unionists being in the sheds, the black-list system of references was slightly extended. Shearing rates were fairly maintained, and no reduction need have been accepted in any district had there been Union men at the sheds, as the season was entirely against the squatter.

With regard to the shed hands, a good deal was done to check the unfair day-wage system, and it only requires a determined stand by the general hands to restore the weekly wage in every district.

At the end of April the Head Office was removed to Sydney. Steps were taken to form a Branch in the metropolis, and some impetus was given to it by the Wool and Leather Workers' Union of Botany deciding to come over in a body. A number have been enrolled of various classes, and it is confidently felt that during 1896 a strong Branch will grow up in and around Sydney.

Your officers took an active part in bringing about the successful amalgamation and uniting of Labor's forces politically, and the satisfactory result of the recent election was largely due to the unity of Labor throughout the colony of New South Wales.

Considerable changes were effected in the management of the WORKER, and a very great saving was thereby made. For full information you are referred to the WORKER Report and Balance-sheet.

For information as to our financial position you are referred to Head Office and Branch Balance-sheets, whilst the usual summary will show you the position of the Union as a whole.

The question of land settlement is dealt with in a Special Report. Separate Reports are also supplied by Organizer Rae and WORKER Management.

W. G. SPENCE, *General Secretary.*

Mr. J. A. Cook (Adelaide) moved the adoption of the General Secretary's Report.

Mr. F. J. Gilbert seconded.

Mr. D. Temple (Creswick) suggested that the paragraph stating that many non-Unionists would rather spend £1 in beer than pay 10s. to protect their own interests, although true, was rather strong; but the delegates considered the statement amply justified, and the report was unanimously carried without alteration.

QUESTION OF POLICY FOR COMING SEASON.

Mr. Gilbert asked how the general questions had been settled by members' votes, as that would bear upon the policy to be adopted for the coming season.

The President read the results, showing that a majority had voted for questions 4 and 5 in the affirmative, thus deciding that they would prefer going on with the '94 agreement unless the P.U. attempted to reduce rates, in which case they decided for going for a new Union agreement. A majority also voted for £175 as the maximum salary for Secretaries of Branches, and for the retention of the present Editor of the WORKER. The Constitution and General Rules were, *excepting the proposed increased contribution*, already in force, he took it, until amended by this Conference.

QUEENSLAND A.W.U.

The General Secretary just then read a letter from Mr. A. Hinchcliffe, from the A.W.U. of Queensland, notifying that owing to our A.W.U. having negatived the proposed increased contribution, they could not further entertain the proposal to amalgamate.

REPORTS BY BRANCH SECRETARIES.

The President pointed out the importance of deciding as to the attitude of members of Conference in matter of agreements, apart from financial considerations only.

Secretary Spence suggested each delegate reporting as to the position and outlook in their respective districts.

The delegates of each Branch represented then made lengthy statements concerning the positions of their respective Branches, and the prospects for the coming season.

Conference adjourned at 6 p.m. until 10 a.m. the next day.

FIFTH DAY—THURSDAY, FEB. 6.

Conference re-assembled at 10 a.m. All delegates present, excepting Mr. D. Macdonell, of Bourke, who withdrew on the previous day.

REMUNERATION TO MR. J. C. WATSON.

Before proceeding with regular business, the President (Mr. Sleath) asked Conference to decide the question of the amount of remuneration to be made to Mr. J. C. Watson, M.P., who had attended Conference and occupied the chair during several days. Mr. Watson had attended as General Returning-officer owing to the results of ballots not being all to hand at the stipulated time, and had been detained through no desire of his own, and he (Mr. Sleath) thought it only right that Mr. Watson should be paid for his lost time.

In answer to a question, General Secretary Spence stated that no fees had previously been paid, as no elections had been held in exactly the same manner, excepting once, when he himself being returned as President unopposed acted as General Returning-officer without payment.

On the motion of Mr. J. J. M'Carthy, seconded by Mr. G. A. Burgess, it was resolved—

That Mr. Watson be paid a fee of five guineas (£5 5s.), together with delegate's fee, dating from the time he left Sydney until his return.

The minutes of the previous day's proceedings were then read and confirmed.

POLICY FOR COMING SEASON.

Discussion was then resumed on the question of the future policy of the Union.

The President said he agreed generally with the views expressed by delegates the previous afternoon. He considered that our policy should be to organize to the greatest extent possible, and whatever we may have thought of those who had in the past deserted us, we should endeavor to reorganize them into our ranks. Every effort should be made to curtail expenditure, both in Branches and Head Office. He strongly disagreed with the various proposals to reduce the number of Branches; rather should we extend the organization by sending out competent men in every Branch to wipe away the misrepresentations which had been made by our enemies, paid and otherwise. He thought that the whole of the Branches should be retained as they were for the present, and every effort made to increase our membership. Whatever else we did, we should make the coming year one of quiet, steady, determined organization, both on the part of the Branch and Executive officers.

Messrs. Gilbert, Burgess, Reid, Temple, Cook, M'Carthy, Spence, Toomey, M'Inerney and M'Cook addressed themselves to the question, after which the following resolution was, on the motion of Messrs. J. Reid and D. Temple, put and carried unanimously—

AGREEMENT.

That members be permitted to shear under the best form of agreement they can obtain during the coming season, providing that in any district or at any shed where members resolve to stand for any better form of agreement than that offered to them they shall receive the support of their Branch.

SHEARING RATES.

Mr. M'Carthy moved, Mr. M'Cook seconded—

That the shearing rate of 20s. per 100 be maintained throughout New South Wales.

UNION PRISONERS.

Mr. M'Inerney, on a question of privilege, brought forward the case of two members, one of Bourko and one of Young Branch, who were accused of sheep-stealing on apparently the most trivial grounds, and were now in Queenbeyan Gaol awaiting trial. He thought that we might, individually, each give a little towards securing them an adequate defence, as the squatter on whose ground they were camped was a most determined enemy of Unionism, and the two men charged were, it was believed, loyal supporters of the A.W.U.

Mr. Sleath said he might as well stop the discussion, as it was a matter entirely for individual delegates to act as they thought fit. Personally, so many men who claimed to have suffered during the '94 strike appealed to him for assistance that he did not think we should be asked to back up, either as a Union or as individuals, those who were accused of a crime like sheep-stealing, although he knew that many of our enemies would stop at nothing to injure members.

The matter then dropped.

SHEARING RATES.

The discussion on the question of price was resumed by the President, who asked Mr. Temple to take the chair while he was speaking.

Several motions and amendments were submitted, and all the delegates present took part in the discussion.

Mr. Rae, as ex-President, was invited to give Conference the benefit of his experience and opinions, and did so.

Final consideration of the question was postponed until the next day, and Conference at 6 o'clock adjourned until 10 a.m. on Friday.

SIXTH DAY—FRIDAY, FEB. 7.

Conference assembled at 9.30. Delegates present—all excepting Mr. Macdonell, of Bourke.

The minutes of previous day's meeting were read and confirmed.

POLITICAL LABOR LEAGUE.

The General Secretary read a letter from Mr. T. Rentley, General Secretary of the Political Labor League, re uniform political ticket, which was received.

POLICY FOR COMING SEASON.

A general discussion on the question of policy for the coming season was resumed.

REDUCTION OF BRANCHES.

The President suggested a broad resolution dealing with the question as to whether Branches should be reduced or otherwise; and if the principle of reduction was confirmed, they could then deal with the specific proposals on the business paper.

Mr. Temple moved, and Mr. M'Inerney seconded—

That Branch boundaries remain as at present, and that to give effect to the members' desire for retrenchment, and to assist the Union to regain a strong financial position, saving be effected in all officers' salaries, agents' wages, and other items of expenditure, where possible, without impairing the efficient work and organization of the Union.

Mr. Gilbert considered the resolution amounted to an admission that we had previously spent money foolishly. He objected to reducing Secretaries' salaries to a level such as was foreshadowed by the resolution.

Mr. Toomey moved as an amendment—

That in view of there being a desire on the part of a large section of members to reduce the number of Branches of the A.W.U., this Conference considers the number of Branches should be reduced to four in New South Wales, and one each in Victoria and South Australia.

In doing so, he considered it was a wrong movement, but he was instructed to move it, while he considered that it was really dictated by P.U. agents sailing under Unionistic colors. He thought that the amount fixed by plebiscite as the maximum salary for Secretaries of Branches (£175) was quite low enough, and he would prefer to see some Branches wiped out altogether, and those retained giving a good salary to their officers, than that they should grind down their officers' salaries.

Mr. M'Inerney said that they had all been workingmen, and if they lost their present positions would not be able, on the average, to earn more than £2 per week at any other kind of employment open to them. They had been accused by their enemies of only working for high salaries, and if they were not able to get them they (the Secretaries) would be guilty of scabbing themselves. He (Mr. M'Inerney) did not believe that, but he desired to deprive both their enemies and members of any chance of accusing them of self-seeking motives. He had always consistently refused to take a high salary himself, and he considered that, as a workingman, he should be satisfied with an average workingman's wage. Furthermore, the demands made upon paid officers for assistance were no excuse for high salaries, because if they got £500 per annum the demands made would be heavy in proportion; whereas, if they got lower salaries, they could honestly claim to be unable to meet heavy demands.

Mr. M'Carthy intended opposing both motion and amendment. He endorsed the views expressed by those who objected to reducing salaries, but he favored a re-adjustment of Branch boundaries so far as New South Wales was concerned.

Mr. Temple considered the motion which he had moved with comment was one commending itself to every delegate who desired to place the Union upon its former footing. It was the duty of every patriotic official to agree to a reduction for the present; at any rate, to accept a lower salary. They were all working-men, and so far as most of them were concerned, they were receiving more than they could earn outside. They were all shearers, and as their fellow-members had to accept lower wages, they should not hesitate to share the poverty which workers generally had to endure. At the same time, he considered that as more organizing work than ever before would be required, it would be bad policy to reduce the number of Branches. He strongly impressed upon delegates the good effect that would be produced by them accepting a voluntary reduction in their salaries, and at the same time throwing more vigor into the work of organizing.

Mr. Gilbert dissented from the proposal to reduce salaries. Personally, he would rather put his swag on his back and leave his office than accept a starvation wage while he had a wife and large family to keep. He had received £6 per week for managing a mine, while for working much harder in the same mine he could only get £2 10s. per week. It was purely a question of ability and responsibility, and, as he strongly believed in paying a fair wage to those having big responsibilities to bear, he would oppose the proposal.

Mr. Spence thought the discussion had wandered from the real question, which was the reduction of Branches. He dissented from Mr. M'Inerney's statement that they could not earn as much outside. As a matter of fact, he thought that if Branch Secretaries had used their energies and abilities to promote their own personal advantage they would all be in a much better financial position than they were now. The real question was whether they could in their present position manage to retain the whole of the Branches until next shearing. If they could, it would be a distinct advantage to have a number of centres from which to do effective organizing work.

Messrs. M'Carthy, Temple, Toomey, and M'Inerney, by request, explained the position and prospects of their respective Branches, detailing their liabilities to the WORKER and outside creditors, and the methods they would suggest for carrying on until next season.

The President expressed a doubt as to whether any real saving would be effected by reducing the number of Branches, owing to the extra expense that would be entailed upon the remaining Branches if these territories were enlarged. At this stage also, he thought it unwise to attempt a re-adjustment of boundaries. He thought the Secretaries of the smaller Branches, at any rate, could devote the off-season to the work of organizing in their several districts.

Mr. Gilbert moved—

That the debate on the question of the reduction of Branches be adjourned until the future management of the WORKER has been decided and the Branch balance-sheets overhauled.

Carried.

EX-PRESIDENT RAE'S REPORT.

During the afternoon, ex-President Rae's report was read, received, and adopted, as follows:

FELLOW MEMBERS,—

Nearly twelve months have elapsed since I was elected to the high and honorable office of President of the Australian Workers' Union. That Union, in spite of stormy struggles and some bitter reverses, is even now one of the strongest Labor organizations in Australia and the only Bush Union which has survived the attacks from within and without which have destroyed other bodies possessing much greater advantages.

The unique position occupied by our Union justifies me in supplementing the report of the General Secretary by a few remarks covering a somewhat wider field of action, and, in the light of my special experience, in offering some comments upon past events, with suggestions for our future guidance. It is the more necessary that I should pursue this course, inasmuch as our last Annual Conference cast new duties and responsibilities upon my office, which were further increased in May last by my appointment as General Organizer for the current year by the Executive Council.

At the Albury Conference, or Convention, of last February, it was decided to continue the struggle against the agreement which the Pastoralists' Union had endeavored to force upon our members during the previous season. The Executive Council meeting in the following May reversed that decision, and advised members to make their own terms as to agreements, providing they maintained the Union rates of pay. So much criticism of that action has been indulged in that it would be cowardly of me not to briefly explain a few facts which many of our critics either ignore or suppress.

Firstly, although, as President, I occupied the chair and might, therefore, claim to have been playing a neutral part, I make no such claim. I summoned the Executive meeting for the special purpose of reconsidering our position, and I used my strongest efforts to bring about that decision which has been so freely condemned, believing it to be in the best interests of members to avoid a conflict in the then depressed state of the labor market. I, therefore, freely take my full share of praise or blame for that action.

Two classes of members condemn the Executive decision. Firstly, the good, staunch members who thought we could win, and, in any case, would rather die than surrender, and were apt to consider other men as loyal as themselves and other districts as good as their own. Secondly, the false-hearted ticket-Unionists, who were furious at being deprived by the Executive of an opportunity of securing all the best and earliest sheds at the expense of their more loyal comrades. The first class I refer to will give the Executive every credit for good intentions, however much they may differ from their decision; the second is utterly unworthy of consideration at our hands.

I must also point out that, as the Executive Council consists of one member elected annually by each Branch, together with the officers, a full meeting of that body is as strong and influential and as representative of every Branch interest as the Albury Convention, which consisted of an exactly similar number of delegates. At the time the manifesto of the Executive was issued, it was impossible to give members all the reasons at our back without betraying them to our enemies of the P.U., and we, therefore, gave reasons which, while perfectly true, did not cover the whole ground.

At this stage, however, when the season is over and the danger has passed away, I may frankly inform members that we had not sufficient means to carry on a general strike for one month. The 1894 struggle had practically bankrupted several Branches, and the stronger ones had to expend a great part of their credit balances in assisting to honorably pay the debts of their weaker fellows. At the time of the Conference in Albury all the liabilities of Branches were not known, as strike accounts from some of the later districts were received after the close of the books and the annual audit had been made. This fact, together with the possibility in February of securing a Conference with the P.U., by showing a bold front to our opponents, made the position then, and in the May following, so different that a reconsideration of our attitude was not only justifiable, but imperative.

On my return to Sydney after the Albury Convention I was waited upon by a gentleman engaged in the pastoral industry, who expressed a desire to act as mediator between the A.W.U. and the P.U., with a view to effecting a settlement, if possible. I asked that gentleman to put his proposals, which involved some modifications of the General Secretary's Annual Report, into writing; and Mr. Spence and members of the Executive were duly apprised of the fact, the name of the gentleman being withheld by his wish. Those efforts were, however, quite fruitless; and as the information at my command showed much poverty and consequent weakness among members, I deemed it wise to consult Branches on the position. About this time, to increase our industrial troubles, we were threatened with a general strike among the underpaid coal-miners of Newcastle and district.

All these facts led me to consider that a renewal of the pastoral struggle of the previous year would be both a blunder and a crime, and my opinion was shared by a large majority of those forming the Executive Council meeting. What has happened in consequence of that action of the Executive is known to all, but what might have occurred had we decided to fight to a finish in 1895 can only be conjectured from our experience of previous industrial struggles when destitute men have been driven to desperation.

The Albury Convention decided, among other things, that, as Chairman of the WORKER Board of Trustees, I should attend monthly meetings of the Board of Control, and this duty has been regularly discharged when circumstances would allow.

The Executive meeting in May, having regard to the various important duties to discharge, decided to appoint me as General Organizer, at a salary of £200 per annum; and, in consideration of the work already performed, the appointment was ante-dated to the 1st March.

It was decided that, as soon as practicable, I should visit the Victorian Branches and the South-east of South Australia. The work in connection with the establishment of the Head Office in Sydney and the re-organization of the WORKER Management fully occupied my time until the latter end of June, when I started on a tour through the Southern Branches of New South Wales, intending to proceed thence to Victoria overland. I accordingly visited Young, Grenfell, and Gundagai, when the sudden dissolution of the New South Wales Parliament upset this arrangement. It was deemed advisable that, as President, I should regain the seat in Parliament which I had lost twelve months before, if possible; and the chances being fairly good, the officers of the Branches concerned consented to postpone my intended visit. Owing, however, to various circumstances, but chiefly to the bad electoral law in force, over 500 of my old constituents were disfranchised, and I was defeated by 127 votes. Subsequently, various causes, which can best be explained verbally, prevented me from resuming that tour, but I have paid visits to a large number of Branch centres, and have addressed numerous meetings in support of Unionism.

In September I obtained a six months' second-class railway pass for all New South Wales lines, and since then have visited Hay, Wagga, Young, Goulburn, Yass, Queanbeyan, Bungendore, Bourke, Cobar, Newcastle, Quirindi, and other places along the lines leading to those towns. In addition, by coach and horse, other places were visited, including a number of sheds in the Riverina. Altogether, I estimate that I have travelled over between 10,000 and 12,000 miles of country since my appointment, and much more might have been effected under favorable conditions. The results are not easily demonstrated, but, in spite of many drawbacks and most disheartening circumstances, I believe I have effected some good.

In the early part of the year I, along with several other A.W.U. delegates upon the New South Wales Provincial Council of the Labor Federation, attended several meetings for the purpose of bringing about a better understanding between the various sections of the Political Labor Party. The chief difficulty previously in the way of healing the serious breaches in our ranks had been the want of any definite agreement or bond of union between those who differed with the policy of the old Labor Electoral Leagues as voiced by the Central Committee of that body. To surmount that difficulty I had always urged organization among the dissentients, not for the purpose of perpetuating conflict, but so that the points of difference could be clearly defined and authoritatively stated. I am glad to say that this view prevailed, with the result that the Political Labor Federation was formed, and a pledge differing only slightly from that recommended by last Convention of the A.W.U. was formulated, and, along with other suggested reforms, was submitted to the L.E.L. branches through the Central Committee. Several meetings were held and a joint committee of the two bodies was formed, which reduced the points of difference to a minimum; and ultimately a joint convention of the Labor Electoral Leagues and the Political Labor Federation was held on the 24th of May, which resulted in a complete agreement being effected, and the amalgamation of the two bodies under a new constitution and a new name—"The Political Labor League." The final healing of the split in our ranks was a matter for rejoicing among all well-wishers of our Cause, and the general elections, which took place in the following July, were fought out under the new conditions with perfect amity, and, under the circumstances, with a large measure of success.

In accordance with the decision of Albury Convention, your General Secretary and Mr. Medway Day, with Mr. J. C. Watson and myself, interviewed the New South Wales Minister for Lands with reference to the A.W.U. taking up land for the settlement of our members thereon under co-operative conditions. The Minister expressed approval and sympathy with the idea, and recommended us to apply for a lease of what are known as inferior leases. We found that the Trade Union Act made it almost impossible to register as at present constituted, and that even if we modified our Rules to admit of registration, the Act would still place great obstacles in the way of the Union holding land with a legal title to the improvements made by means of Union monies. Our unsettled condition and lack of surplus funds made it inexpedient for us to proceed further under the circumstances, and we have, therefore, confined our attention to a study of the

land laws of New South Wales and the Trade Union Act with a view to making recommendations when a more favorable time for action arrives. For the reasons here stated, other forms of co-operation have not been entered into during the past year, although we have never ceased to advocate the principle.

I consider that drastic alterations must be made in our Rules and methods of work if the power of our Union is to be restored and placed upon a more sound and durable footing. Relegating the most important, as well as the most trivial, questions to a plebiscite of members has become a melancholy and expensive farce, while tying the hands and destroying the power for good of the best and ablest officials. Even the soundest Democratic principle may become a mere mischievous hobby-horse, and be ridden to death. Members must shake off their mistrust and suspicion, which is the enemy of true unity, and having carefully selected the best men, must give them loyal and generous support. Officers of Branches must in their turn prove more worthy of that support and confidence by taking a broader view of their powers and duties, and the Union as a whole must preach a higher ideal of Unionism than that involved in a mere struggle for hours and wages and a frantic struggle for an "early cut."

Too much has been made of mere numbers and amount of subscriptions received, and not enough of the principles of loyalty and brotherly regard for each others' interest. In my opinion, we would be infinitely stronger with five thousand loyal, reliable members than with fifty thousand of the kind who, to a large extent, now comprise the voting strength of our organization.

The correspondence between the General Secretary, Mr. Poynton (of Port Augusta Branch) and myself—which has led to the closing of that Branch—must come up for consideration, and as Mr. Poynton has been invited to be present, I will not here comment further upon one of the most regrettable facts in the history of our Union.

The severance of Mr. J. A. Ross from the WORKER management and the re-organization of the staff are also matters which will be brought specially before you by report, and probably by the presence of the Editor, and therefore do not require lengthy treatment here.

In connection with co-operative land settlement proposals, I have omitted to state that the General Secretary and myself took a trip extending over three days to examine some Crown lands bordering the Hawkesbury River. We found rich patches of land heavily timbered, and suitable for intense culture for fruit or vegetables, with easy access by water; and some marketable timber, but very limited in extent. In view of the facts previously set forth, together with the present position and prospects, I have not, however, thought it advisable to make any recommendations regarding the same.

In conclusion, I must thank members for their kindness and loyal support, and with best wishes for the future prosperity of the A.W.U., beg to remain

Yours fraternally,

ARTHUR RAE,
President and General Organizer.

Sydney, January 2, 1896.

Conference then adjourned until 10 a.m. on the following day.

SEVENTH DAY—SATURDAY, FEB. 3.

Conference assembled at 10.5 a.m.
Minutes of previous day's proceedings were read.

PROTEST ON BEHALF OF WAGGA BRANCH.

Mr. M'Cook complained that his protest, entered yesterday on behalf of Wagga Branch against the motion *re* price being put a second time, had not been entered upon the minutes.

After a brief discussion on the matter, the minutes were confirmed as read.
The President objected to protests being entered in such matters.

SATURDAY AFTERNOON SITTING.

Mr. Temple moved—

That Conference adjourn at 12.30 until Monday morning, as we do not think we should work Saturday afternoons.

For Adjournment at 12.30 on Saturdays—	Against—
Mr. Toomey	Mr. Gilbert
Temple	Reid
Cook	M'Cook
M'Carthy	Burgess
M'Inerney	

"THE WORKER."

Mr. J. M. Day, editor and manager of the WORKER (N.S.W.), attended, and it was decided that Conference should consider the Report and Balance-sheet of the WORKER and any questions arising therefrom.

Mr. Day said that as he understood there were some complaints to be brought forward, it might be convenient that they should be taken first. At the same time, he would remind them that his report was addressed to the members of the seven Branches who owned the paper, and he took it that the Conference, as a Conference, had no direct control over these matters.

The President said that if that was the position Conference could only formally receive the report.

Mr. Day said he was quite willing to answer all questions, but only N.S.W. Branches were entitled to vote.

The Report and Balance-sheet were then formally received.

COMPLAINT FROM MOREE BRANCH.

Mr. M'Carthy read correspondence between himself (as Secretary of Moree Branch) and Mr. Day, *re* dispute; and also with Mr. Rae, as President and Chairman of WORKER Trustees.

Mr. Day, in reply, stated that he left the names out of the report referred to as editor, and took the sole responsibility of doing so; at the same time, the course had the approval of the Board of Management. *Re* the £1 charge—as he had not received an answer until too late to his telegram and letter notifying that that charge would be made when he printed the supplement, he would pay it himself. Mr. Day then proceeded to give a full explanation of the whole of the matters leading up to the Moree charges.

Mr. Rae also explained matters bearing on the same.

Mr. Reid and Mr. Temple thought the publication of names in reports quite unnecessary.

Mr. M'Carthy moved—

That Mr. Day be censured for his action in regard to Moree minutes.

Mr. Burgess seconded *pro forma*.

The motion was put and lost, only Mr. M'Carthy voting for it.

Conference adjourned till 2 p.m.

Conference assembled at 2 p.m., Messrs. Cook and Temple absent.

A general discussion on the WORKER management and future position was then entered into, and was finally adjourned until Monday morning.

Conference adjourned at 3.30 p.m. until 9.30 a.m. on Monday.

NINTH DAY—MONDAY FEB. 10.

Conference assembled at 9.30 a.m., Mr. R. Sleath, President, in the chair.
The minutes of Saturday's proceedings were confirmed.

CORRESPONDENCE FROM MR. D. MACDONELL.

Correspondence was read from Mr. D. Macdonell, Bourke Branch delegate, enclosing copies of a telegram sent by him to the Secretary of Wilcannia Political Labor League and two replies—one from Mr. W. G. Champion, Secretary Wilcannia Political Labor League, and the other from Mr. E. J. Blackie, of the same place. The wire from Mr. Champion was enclosed in a note from Mr. T. Routley, General Secretary Political Labor League, Sydney, to whom it was sent by mistake.

The correspondence was received without dissent.

"THE WORKER."

Mr. J. M. Day, Manager and Editor of the New South Wales WORKER, attended, and submitted, according to promise, an approximate estimate of the amount necessary to carry on for the first six months of the current year, together with the total sum required for the whole of 1896.

Some discussion ensued, and Mr. Day replied to several questions, and very fully explained the whole position and prospects of the WORKER.

Final settlement of the question was held over until Branch balance-sheets were considered and dealt with, and the whole financial position of the Union clearly understood.

PORT AUGUSTA BRANCH.

It was then agreed to deal with the Port Augusta Branch business, and the charges made against the late Secretary, Mr. A. Poynton, M.P., who attended and made an explanation of the matters in dispute, and read some correspondence bearing thereon.

Mr. J. A. Cook, Secretary Adelaide Branch, also made a statement in connection with the same matter.

The General Secretary produced correspondence which had passed on the question.

Ex-President Rae explained his action as President in connection with the proposed closing of the Port Augusta Branch; and letters written by him to the Secretary, together with replies, were read.

Conference adjourned at 12.30 for dinner.

Conference re-assembled at 2 p.m.

Discussion on the question of Port Augusta Branch liabilities was resumed.

Mr. M'Cook then moved the following resolution—

That this Conference regrets that it cannot legally recognize the claim nor comply with the request made by the Port Augusta Branch for assistance in liquidating debts incurred since last Annual Conference, and desires to express an opinion that the ex-officials of the Port Augusta Branch should make an appeal to members shearing in that territory during the coming shearing season for subscriptions to liquidate the debts contracted by the officials referred to.

Seconded by Mr. J. M. Toomey.

Mr. M'Inerney opposed the motion, as he thought last Convention was partly to blame for not issuing more positive instructions.

Mr. Reid and Mr. M'Carthy also considered that the motion was unwise, and that the Port Augusta Branch had virtually carried out the recommendations of the Conference and Executive Council.

Mr. Gilbert considered that the Branch members, having signified their ability and desire to carry the Branch on in defiance of the Conference recommendation, should at any rate bear a share of the liabilities since incurred.

Mr. Burgess agreed.

Mr. Reid moved as an amendment—

That the A.W.U. take over the assets and liabilities of the Port Augusta Branch.

Mr. M'Inerney seconded, as he thought the vague recommendations of Conference had brought about the result complained of. At the same time, he blamed the Port Augusta Branch officers for not carrying out the will of Conference and the Executive.

Mr. Spence said that the worst point about it was that members of the Port Augusta Branch were led to vote to carry on the Branch without those voting being in any way responsible for the liabilities thereby incurred.

After some further discussion,

Mr. Burgess moved an amendment, which was defeated.

Finally, the following resolution was carried, on the motion of Mr. Cook—

That the whole of the assets and liabilities of the Port Augusta Branch be taken over and liquidated by the A.W.U.

Mr. M'Cook was the sole dissident on a division being called for.

BRANCH BALANCE-SHEETS.

The Head Office and Sydney Branch Balance-sheets were then dealt with, and unanimously adopted after brief explanations had been made.

Bourke Branch Balance-sheet was next considered, and several questions by delegates were satisfactorily replied to.

The President then asked a question, upon which

Mr. Macdonell said that he desired, without intending any discourtesy, to inform Mr. Sleath that he could not acknowledge him as President, and must, therefore, deny his right to officially ask him for any explanations. While intending to maintain that stand, he was prepared to reply to any questions asked by delegates, whom he recognized as the only persons at that Conference who had a right to question him concerning his Balance-sheet.

Mr. Sleath said he would not allow the discussion to proceed or anyone to be present who would not acknowledge him in the position to which he was elected.

Mr. Macdonell claimed the right according to Conference's own decision to be present, and, as Secretary of his Branch, asked if any delegate desired any further information in regard to his Balance-sheet.

Mr. Sleath refused to allow delegates to put any further questions except through the chair, or to allow Mr. Macdonell to speak unless he acknowledged him as President.

This Mr. Macdonell refused to do.

The President then refused to proceed further with Bourke Balance-sheet, and called upon the Goulburn delegate, Mr. M'Inerney, to present his, which, after slight discussion, was formally adopted.

Wagga, Scone, Moree, Coonamble, and Adelaide Branch Balance-sheets were also dealt with and adopted in the order mentioned.

EUREKA STOCKADE.

Before adjourning,

Mr. Toomey suggested that the Conference might follow the example of the Inter-colonial Labor Congress of '91 in paying a tribute of respect to the heroes of the Eureka Stockade who died in the defence of liberty.

The suggestion was well received, and Mr. Toomey announced that Mr. Macdonell would inquire the cost of a wreath to place on their tomb, and would arrange all details.

Conference then adjourned at 6.15 until the following morning.

TENTH DAY—TUESDAY, FEB. 11.

Conference assembled at 10.5 a.m.

BOURKE BRANCH PROTEST.

The President said that, before calling on the Secretary to read the minutes, he desired to clearly intimate, after mature consideration, that while he remained in the Conference presiding over its deliberations everyone, whether delegates or visitors, must

recognize his authority. This Mr. Macdonell refused to do, and he would not allow him to be present unless he acknowledged his authority as the duly-elected President. Mr. Macdonell had stated his case, which the Conference had refused to endorse, and having entered his protest, which was received without objection, Mr. Macdonell must now recognize him as President of that Conference or leave the room. If Mr. Macdonell was entitled to defy the chair, then he (Mr. Sleath) refused to remain in it. He, therefore invited delegates to support the stand he had taken by a definite resolution, or he would at once close the Conference.

Mr. Macdonell claimed the right to reply to Mr. Sleath's remarks, and amidst continual interruptions from the Chairman proceeded to state that he had taken up a certain stand based on facts, which Conference had deliberately refused to recognize. He intended to maintain the stand he had taken, because he knew Mr. Sleath to be a defaulter according to our own Rules, and he had withdrawn because Conference had over-ridden those Rules to favor Mr. Sleath against all the laws of evidence. To compel him to now recognize Mr. Sleath as President was an attempt to put him in a false position. If he were to do so, he would be rightly open to a charge of having withdrawn from Conference in order to gratify his own personal feelings, and of acting inconsistently in returning and accepting authority he then disavowed. As it was, he desired to remind them that when withdrawing he had stated his intention of attending when his Branch Balance-sheet was under discussion, and affording delegates the fullest information they might require. Further than that he had no wish to interfere with the business of Conference or to take part in its deliberations under the chairmanship of Mr. Sleath. Having discharged his duty in regard to explaining the Branch Balance-sheet, so far as he had been permitted to do so, he had nothing further to say; but as a member he claimed the right to attend and remain as long as he thought fit.

The President interrupted Mr. Macdonell, and commanded him to cease speaking.

Mr. Macdonell refused to do so until he had made his position clear, whereupon

Mr. Sleath adjourned the Conference for five minutes, and stated his refusal to re-open it unless his authority was to be recognized and maintained. He (Mr. Sleath) said that no meeting of any kind could be carried on unless the authority of the chair was recognized and respected by all, and unless Conference endorsed that view and decided once for all by resolution to uphold his authority he would close the Conference altogether.

Mr. Spence said that he thought there had been no necessity on the part of the President to again raise the question, which had been practically settled the previous afternoon. In his opinion, they were both right in the attitudes they had assumed. There was no doubt that the authority of the Chairman of any meeting must be upheld, but no one disputed that fact, and they must remember also that Mr. Macdonell was justified in acting consistently with the position he had taken up. The Conference had by its silence virtually endorsed the authority of the Chairman, and Mr. Macdonell had simply attended to reply only to those questions affecting his Branch balance-sheet, and having asserted his position, and the authority of the chair not now being called into question, surely they could accept his statement that he had no intention of taking any further part in the Conference. This being the case, it was only seeking cause for disagreement and unduly straining the point to call for a specific resolution on the subject.

Mr. Sleath said that Mr. Macdonell could at any time re-assert his position and claim the rights of a delegate, and might at any time interfere in the business of Conference without acknowledging his rights as Chairman.

Mr. Spence repeated that Mr. Macdonell had clearly stated that he had no desire to do so, and his assurance should be accepted and the matter dropped.

The President then re-opened the Conference, and called on the General Secretary to read the minutes.

Mr. M'Cook objected to the omission of the Bourke Balance-sheet from the list of those which had been adopted.

It was pointed out that the minutes were correct as read, as the Bourke Balance-sheet had not been adopted.

The minutes were then confirmed.

BOURKE BRANCH BALANCE-SHEET.

Mr. M'Cook immediately moved the adoption of the Bourke Branch Balance-sheet.

Mr. M'Inerney seconded the motion.

The President said there were some items he would like explained in regard to the Parliamentary Fund, which had not been made clear to him, but as they mainly concerned Bourke Branch itself, he would not oppose the motion.

The motion was then put and carried unanimously.

CRESWICK BRANCH BALANCE-SHEET.

The Creswick Branch Balance-sheet was then considered.

Mr. Temple explained various items on which he was questioned, and agreed to amend his statement of Branch assets and liabilities so as to remove some discrepancies between his Balance-sheet and that of the Head Office. These were mere matters of book-keeping, and did not affect the actual position of the Union so far as the total assets and liabilities were concerned.

CASTERTON BRANCH BALANCE-SHEET.

The Casterton Branch Balance-sheet was postponed pending the arrival of the Branch Secretary, Mr. Slattery.

"THE WORKER."

On the motion of Mr. Toomey, it was resolved to resume discussion of his motion *re* the WORKER—that it be issued monthly.

Mr. M'Cook raised the point of order whether Conference could carry such a motion in face of the rule providing that important matters must, before settlement, be submitted to a plebiscite of members.

The President over-ruled the point of order, and stated that it could be raised again if the motion was carried, to decide whether the motion could be made operative or not without first submitting it to a plebiscite.

Mr. Spence vigorously opposed the motion. He pointed out that other labor journals had all been failures excepting the Queensland WORKER, which had been very fortunate in its editorship, and had been built up during a number of years by the united and loyal backing it had received from the labor organizations of that colony. He thought the good work done by the WORKER was testified to by the very large majority vote given in favor of the editor, which was also an indirect vote in favor of its continuance. Mr. Toomey's motion meant killing the WORKER at once, although it did not say so straight out. He challenged anyone to deny that the proposal to substitute a monthly journal on some new and undefined lines had nothing in it. He (Mr. Spence) would remind them that Mr. Toomey had given them no estimates of the cost of the proposed monthly, or how it was to be run. On the other hand, the manager would have to be informed if the motion was carried, and would at once shut down, as no new business could be undertaken. Those who voted for the motion, therefore, voted to shut down the WORKER permanently. He urged them to keep the WORKER going as a means of education and to keep the various Branches and sections of labor in touch. They had no occasion to be disheartened with their first serious reverse, but must battle on, and if they were fated to go down, let them go down fighting.

Mr. Temple thought it would be a mistake to close the WORKER, which had done good educative work. There was no doubt that the present position of the working classes everywhere was entirely due to their ignorance of social and economic questions. They had the power in their own hands to alter that position and rescue themselves from the tyrannical oppression which they now endured. He also considered that the Victorian and South Australian Branches should be supplied with the N.S.W. WORKER, and that now their own paper was discontinued the jobbing work from those Branches would help to keep the WORKER going. He would therefore oppose the motion.

Mr. Gilbert was of opinion that the true light to look at the matter was in regard to the financial position. It was purely a matter of ways and means, and he for one doubted, judging by results, whether the educational work done by labour journals was productive of as much good as he at one time hoped would be the case.

Mr. Burgess had grave doubts as to the wisdom of the resolution, which he at first was disposed to support. The closing down of the WORKER would undoubtedly be a saving to the extent of sustentation fees at present paid, but in the long run that might not be a real saving, and would possibly increase the dissatisfaction now existing, and thereby lead to further disorganisation. He thought that the WORKER Trustees possessed ample intelligence to work out the details of any general proposals which this Conference might make. He therefore moved as an amendment—

That the WORKER Trustees be recommended to take into consideration the advisability of retrenchment in the WORKER management.

Mr. M'Inerney seconded the amendment. He felt certain that it would be most inadvisable to proclaim their weakness by closing the WORKER, and he was sure that the Trustees would loyally endeavour to carry out the wishes of the Conference in securing the greatest economy consistent with efficiency.

Mr. M'Cook asked the movers of the amendment to withdraw it and show their courage by coming to a straight-out vote—either to keep on the WORKER or close it down at once.

Mr. Toomey, in reply, considered that what money they had would be much better spent in sending round organizers, who would bring influence to bear upon outsiders, whereas even at the best the WORKER could only reach their members. He predicted that much more than the present manager's estimate would be required. He did not wish to close the WORKER entirely, but to maintain it as a monthly bulletin, which, with some changes in the editorial control, would render it a useful means of continuing the work of organization. As at present run, it certainly did not satisfy him, but, as his motion would be lost, he would conclude by pointing out that several delegates were turning round on their former statements, and some who had previously assured him that they would support his proposal had, according to their speeches, thrown him over and pronounced in favor of the amendment, which meant nothing, and would have no effect.

Mr. Burgess's amendment was then put and lost, and Mr. Toomey's motion to close the present WORKER and ask the Trustees to arrange for the future issue of a monthly was put and carried by five votes to four.

For—
Mr. Gilbert
Cook
Toomey
M'Carthy
Burgess

Against—
Mr. M'Inerney
M'Cook
Reid
Temple

Mr. M'Cook then rose to move that the question be submitted to a plebiscite of members, whereupon

The Chairman suggested postponing his motion, as he would allow the whole question to be re-opened at a later stage, when, if necessary, he would call upon Mr. M'Cook to submit his motion.

REDUCTION OF BRANCHES.

The adjourned matter dealing with the proposal to reduce the number of Branches was then resumed.

Mr. Toomey, by consent, added to his amendment a proposal that the whole of the names of the existing Branches be submitted to a plebiscite of the whole members during the coming shewing season, those Branches receiving the lowest number of votes to be closed after next annual audit.

Mr. M'Cook who had seconded the amendment in its original form, objected to the addition, and withdrew his name as seconder.

Mr. Burgess seconded the motion as amended. Mr. M'Cook opposed it, as he did not think that closing down the WORKER would help to mend matters, but, on the contrary, would lead to the necessity of making immediate Branch reductions.

Mr. M'Carthy supported the proposal. The President suggested that taking a plebiscite might be unwise, as those knocked out might in the meantime have increased in numbers and strength.

The General Secretary suggested that it would be best to decide for or against the principle of reduction, and then follow that resolution, if in the affirmative, by another defining how the former one should be carried out. He thought Conference was the proper body to decide one way or the other, and not to incur the useless expense of printing and scrutineers' fees involved in the taking of a big ballot.

Mr. Cook opposed any reduction, as he thought they wanted more, and not fewer, Branches at the present stage.

Mr. Temple thought the financial position of the respective Branches was not a fair guide as to which of them should be closed, if any, as they had perhaps got into difficulties through their members holding out; and he favored retaining Branches where they had done good work, whether at present solvent or not.

The amendment was then put and defeated. The original motion by Mr. Temple against the reduction of Branches was then put and carried by five to four on division.

In favor of the motion
for no reduction
Mr. Temple
Reid
M'Carthy
Cook
M'Inerney

Against the
motion—
Mr. M'Cook
Gilbert
Toomey
Burgess

REFERENCES.

Mr. Toomey moved—

That members be instructed not to give or take references.

Seconded by Mr. M'Cook.

Mr. Cook opposed the motion, as he considered that, if the reference system was permitted, the evil would work itself out; and he believed that the large number of men affected in New South Wales would render it ultimately impossible to use the references to any extent as a means of boycotting good men. While personally opposed to the system, he thought it inadvisable to make a stand upon this question, which would only prejudicially affect the good men, while leaving the way open for others to monopolize the work.

Mr. Spence thought it required very serious consideration, in view of the facts adduced as to the position of our members. The districts bordering Queensland, where the system was permitted, were particularly affected by the use of references on one side and the prohibition of them on the other.

Mr. Reid said the system was almost universally prevalent in the sheds in Southern Riverina.

Mr. Gilbert related incidents to prove that in some way or other references were issued in such a way as to affect the engagement of certain men, but whether by confidential lists or otherwise he did not know.

The motion against references was then put and carried.

For—
Mr. Gilbert
Toomey
Reid
M'Cook
Burgess
Temple

Against—
Mr. Cook
M'Carthy
M'Inerney

METHOD OF ENGAGEMENT

Mr. M'Inerney moved—

That the method of engagement be left to members

Mr. J. Reid seconded.

Mr. J. A. Cook supported, and after a brief discussion the motion was carried o division.

For—
Mr. Temple
M'Inerney
Cook
Reid
M'Cook

Against—
Mr. M'Carthy
Burgess
Toomey
Gilbert

REFERENCES.

Mr. M'Carthy moved—

That the previous question concerning references be reopened, as it conflicted with those previously carried.

The motion for re-opening was carried, several members expressing an opinion that it was no use making partial concessions, which would be quite useless under the circumstances.

Mr. M'Carthy then moved—

That the question of the use of references be left optional to members.

Mr. Reid seconded.

The President, while recognising the evil of references, was strongly of opinion that under our present circumstances it was best to allow members to accept them.

The motion was carried on division.

For—
Mr. Temple
Cook
M'Carthy
Reid
M'Inerney

Against—
Mr. Gilbert
Toomey
Burgess
M'Cook

POLICY FOR THE SHEARING SEASON OF 1896.

The General Secretary and Mr. A. Rae were then authorized to draw up a statement of the Union policy for 1896 for publication, and submit the same for the approval of Conference.

This was done, and the report being unanimously adopted without alteration was published, as follows:—

[N.B.—To prevent any misunderstanding, members will note that the following instructions apply equally to shearers and shed hands.]

FELLOW MEMBERS,—

During the last shearing season a ballot of the whole membership was taken as to the form of agreement that would be favored by you for next season.

That ballot closed on the 31st December, 1895, and the results show that you have carried contradictory proposals, one of them in favor of fighting for a new agreement on Union lines, and the other in favor of pursuing the course that was followed last year.

It is quite evident that we cannot do both, and the Annual Conference, which was called together a fortnight earlier than usual to devise means to carry out your decision, had to assume the responsibility of deciding the important question which your votes had left unsettled. On carefully examining all the balance-sheets and ascertaining our exact financial position, together with the number of members financial for the present year, we find a large falling off both in numbers and money. In addition to these facts, the number of men seeking work and finding none is greater than ever.

Many of our own members have had little or no employment for the last two or three years, and are not, therefore, in a position to fight in defence of their rights as they were a few years ago. In consequence, it is our duty to candidly state that we have neither the numbers, nor the financial resources, nor the chances of winning that would justify us in advising you to renew in '96 the industrial struggle of '94.

After the most careful consideration of the question from every point of view, we have decided upon the policy for the coming season as embodied in the following resolutions:—

AGREEMENT.

1. That members shear under the best agreements they can obtain during the coming season, but in any district or at any shed where they resolve to stand out for any better agreement than that offered, they shall receive the support of the Branch having control of such district.

PRICE.

2. Those Branches which consider that they can maintain full Union rates be urged to do so. Where Branches are unable to enforce these terms, members to accept the highest obtainable.

Branches to support the action of all who refuse to accept less than Union rates.

REFERENCES.

3. That the use of references be optional with members.

ENGAGEMENT.

4. That the method of engagement be left to members.

MACHINE SHEARING.

5. No member shall be permitted to purchase his shearing machine.

CONTRACT SHEARING.

6. Members shall not engage to shear for any shearing contractor.

In thus submitting the policy for the coming season, we trust that members will recognize that Conference officials and delegates have not in any way changed the opinions they have always held as to the unjust conditions sought to be imposed upon you, both in the matter of price and agreements, as well as in the attempted enforcement of the iniquitous reference system and engagement through P.U. offices. It is necessity alone that compels us to recommend you to accept for the present year the policy laid down by these resolutions.

We believe that by doing so you will be able to maintain the organization, which has upheld fair conditions for Australian bush workers during past years.

Like every other organization, we must expect to undergo reverses, and remember the fact that every Labor Union of Australia has had to endure worse misfortunes than we have yet experienced. Members should not be in any way discouraged by a temporary set-back. Everyone who can see and understand plain facts must admit that the A.W.U., from its inception nearly ten years ago, has raised and kept up the rates both of shearing and other forms of pastoral labor. In the matter of agreements and conditions generally, it has successfully battled against some of the worst forms of injustice that Australian workers were ever called upon to endure.

It is only by maintaining the Union, which has done so much in the past, that you can hope to do anything to better your position in the future. Had all who were once within our ranks remained loyal to the principles they then professed, our position could never have been shaken. Now, however, that members have experienced a foretaste of the tyranny which the P.U. would impose upon us, and which our weakness compels us to accept, it ought to be clearly apparent to everyone that infinitely worse results will be certain to follow if they allow the Union, their only bulwark, to drift to destruction.

(Signed by resolution of Conference)

RICHARD SLEATH, *President.*

W. G. SPENCE, *General Secretary.*

Ballarat, February 12, 1896.

Motions Nos. 28 by Young Branch and 29 by Moree Branch were moved, and lapsed for want of seconders.

REGISTRATION OF THE A.W.U.

Mr. Toomey moved—

That the Unions be registered in each colony.

He expressed the opinion that it would safeguard the funds and give general satisfaction to members.

Mr. Rae explained the position under the present Trades Union Act, which restricted the objects and powers of the Union to such an extent that we could not, if we were registered, undertake co-operative works, land settlement, or road contracts, nor could we own property such as the WORKER newspaper, the Bourke Co-operative Laundry, or any similar venture.

Mr. Cook also pointed out the disadvantages of registration under the Act, which he considered outweighed any possible advantages.

Mr. Gilbert differed from the previous speakers, and thought that registration would materially assist us in prosecuting defaulting shed representatives.

Mr. M'Carthy related the following facts to show that without registration we had ample means of securing the conviction of defaulters in New South Wales: In May last, T. J. Walsh, an Agent of the Moree Branch in Inverell, stopped £18 10s. out of moneys he had collected for tickets sold; £18 of this amount he claimed as wages for work and labor done in attending strike camps, and 10s. for a ticket issued by him on credit. The

Secretary of the Moree Branch was made nominal owner by resolution of Branch Committee meeting, and proceeded against Walsh under common law for the recovery of the amount. Judgment was given against Walsh for the sum of £4 8s., and recovered by process of issuing a distress warrant. This decision was given by a full Bench, the Police Magistrate presiding. Although the defendant, Walsh, had counsel who raised the point that the Union not being registered could not recover, this objection was overruled by the Bench, as the Secretary had been made nominal owner, and in spite of the fact that, excepting the Police Magistrate, the magistrates present were sheepowners. Owing to the wording of the wire authorizing Walsh to form a camp, he secured the greater part of the amount claimed; but that does not affect the fact that the Bench upheld the right of the Union to sue and recover.

Mr. Burgess spoke in support of the motion, and

The President and General Secretary related various incidents to show that registration under the Trades Union Acts in the various colonies involved them in many difficulties, and gave but doubtful advantages in return.

The motion was then put, and lost by six votes to three.

BRANCH COMMITTEES' EXPENSES.

A motion to abolish payment of fees and fares to members of Branch Committees, by Bourke Branch, was moved and seconded.

After a brief discussion, the motion was put and lost on division.

For—	Against—
Mr. Gilbert	Mr. M'Inernery
Burgess	Temple
Reid	Toomey
M'Carthy	Cook
	M'Cook

MEMBERS' ROLLS.

Resolved—

That the rule relating to the publication of members' roll-books be maintained.

"WORKER" SUSTENTATION.

Resolved—

That motion No. 70, by Bourke Branch, instructing Branches to put the WORKER sustentation fee aside at the end of each year to a separate fund, the same not to be used for any other purpose, become a new rule.

NOMINATIONS FOR EXECUTIVE OFFICES.

Resolved—

That the following stand as a new rule:—Any twenty-five or more financial members may nominate candidates for any of the General Executive offices. Such nominations must be in writing, and must be signed by at least 25 members, with date and place from which sent. The written consent of nominees must be in the hands of the General Returning-officer before the close of nominations.

SHEARING CONTRACTORS.

Resolved—

That members be prohibited from working at shearing under shearing contractors.

SHEARING MACHINES.

Resolved—

That members of the Union be debarred from using any shearing machines but those supplied free of cost by the employer.

CO-OPERATIVE WORKS.

Resolved—

That Branches be authorized to establish any co-operative undertaking upon the following conditions:—1. That, on a Branch ballot taken during the season, not less than two-thirds of those voting shall have decided in favor of such proposal. 2. That the Branch Committee shall first supply the General Executive and their members with full particulars of the scheme proposed and the amount proposed to be expended. 3. The Executive to be kept informed of the progress of any such enterprise.

Conference then adjourned.

ELEVENTH DAY—WEDNESDAY, FEB. 12.

Conference assembled at 10 a.m. All delegates present. Minutes were read and confirmed.

CASTERTON BRANCH AND VICTORIAN "WORKER."

Mr. James Slattery, Secretary Casterton Branch, attended to explain the Casterton Balance-sheet and the position of the Victorian WORKER. Casterton Branch Balance-sheet was discussed and adopted.

COLLECTION OF MONEY BY LISTS INSTEAD OF TICKET-BOOKS.

Resolution No. 94, by Wagga Branch, proposing to have all moneys at sheds collected by means of lists, instead of by issue of ticket-books.

Mr. M'Cook moved, Mr. Toomey seconded.

Motion lost, all others opposing.

BRANCH EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

Resolution No. 96, by Seone Branch, was moved by Mr. Gilbert, and after discussion was carried in an amended form better calculated to effect the object of the motion, and ordered to stand as a new rule as follows:—

The Chairman, one Vice-chairman, and the Secretary of each Branch shall constitute a Branch Executive Committee, such Executive Committee to take the place of the present Executive Councillor, and in the event of a General Executive Council Meeting being called, the Branch Executive shall nominate any one of its number to attend and fulfil the duties of Executive Councillor.

DIVISION LISTS.

A further motion by Seone, to provide that Branch Secretaries be supplied with division lists of all motions considered by the Executive Council, was after some discussion carried

PARLIAMENTARY FUND

Mr. Gilbert moved a proposal (No. 98) to abolish the A.W.U. Parliamentary Fund or restrict its application to members of the Union selected by the local Labor League. The fund to be centralized in the Head Office, and administered from there by the Executive Council.

The difficulties and disadvantages of the proposal were pointed out by the General Secretary, and

The President pointed out that part of the proposal was opposed to the agreement with the Political Labor League in New South Wales.

Motion amended, put, and lost.

BRANCH BALLOTS.

Motion by Wagga to stand as new rule—

All ballots taken at sheds shall be counted and checked there, the Representative to act as Deputy Returning-officer, and the members of Shed Committee as scrutineers. The results to be filled in on a proper form supplied from the office, giving name of shed, number voting each way, and signatures of Representative and Scrutineers. Such returns to be sent, with all ballot papers, to the Branch Returning-officers, who shall, after the close of the ballot, publish the results from each shed, showing the number recorded in Branch and Agencies separately. The whole of the ballots in each Branch to be re-counted by the Branch Returning-officer, and all discrepancies and informalities (if any) to be noted in the published return.

NEW RULES

Resolved—

That the following, forwarded by the Wagga Branch, stand as new rules:—

OFFICERS TO BE FINANCIAL MEMBERS NOT LESS THAN THREE YEARS.

1. No person shall be eligible to be nominated for or elected to the positions of President, Vice-President, General Secretary, or General Treasurer unless proof has been supplied to the General Returning-officer that the candidate has been a financial member of the Union for not less than three years.

RETIRING PRESIDENT AND GENERAL SECRETARY TO ATTEND CONFERENCE.

2. In the event of the President or General Secretary then holding office being defeated in the general ballot for Executive Officers, they shall attend and open the next Annual Conference, and retain their positions until their annual reports and balance-sheets have been submitted and adopted or otherwise, after which the new officers shall be installed; the retiring President and General Secretary to have seats at such Conference, with the right of speech, but without vote.

SALARY OF PRESIDENT.

3. No regular salary shall attach to the position of President, but he shall be paid for the time spent in the performance of his official duties on a scale fixed by Conference. He shall be required to submit a report fully showing the nature of the work done and the time spent in connection with the same to the Conference or any special meeting of the Executive Council.

MAINTENANCE OF HEAD OFFICE.

4. Head office shall supply an approximate estimate of its financial requirements for the current year to each Annual Conference. The amount agreed to be voted shall be divided by the total financial membership of the Union, and each Branch shall be levied upon proportionately to its membership; such amounts to be immediately placed to the credit of the Head Office account.

FEEDING TRAVELLERS.

Resolved—

That travellers calling at shearers' huts shall not be fed at their expense unless they produce tickets of membership in some Labor Union, without some member working at such shed can guarantee their bona fides. If not financial for current year, tickets of the previous year shall be deemed sufficient, except in the case of those known to have since blacklegged.

CONTRIBUTIONS OF SHED HANDS.

Resolved—

That contributions for shed hands shall be 6s. per annum, payable in advance, with an entrance fee of 2s. 6d. and a similar amount as fine for arrears.

CHARGES AGAINST OFFICIALS.

Resolution 100, by Moree Branch, providing for alteration of Branch By-law to secure the hearing and decision of any charge against a paid official by a duly convened general meeting of Branch members, was moved by Mr. M'Carthy, and carried without opposition.

VOTING POWER OF MEMBERS.

Mr. Burgess moved—

That By-law 78 be struck out, and financial members of the Union to be allowed to vote in any Branch on all questions, irrespective of the Branches to which they belong.

Motion defeated.

VOTING POWER OF CONFERENCE DELEGATES.

Mr. M'Cook moved—

That in future Branches send only one Delegate to the Annual Conference, with voting power in proportion to the number of financial members in their respective Branches.

The motion was defeated.

EUREKA STOCKADE.

Mr. Toomey reported that Mr. D. Macdonell had arranged for a wreath to be placed on the obelisk erected to the memory of the defenders of the Eureka Stockade. The sum of £2 5s. 6d. had been collected for the purpose, which would leave sufficient for the purchase of a tablet, on which it was suggested the following inscription should be placed:—

A tribute of regard to the heroes of the Eureka Stockade, who were the first to lay down their lives for Australian freedom. From the representatives of the Australian Workers assembled in conference at Ballarat, February, 1896.

The suggestion was adopted, and Mr. Macdonell requested to complete arrangements. Conference adjourned for dinner at 1 p.m.

SECRETARIES AS DELEGATES TO CONFERENCE.

Mr. M'Cook moved, on behalf of Bourke Branch (No. 137)—

That Branch Secretaries be not eligible for nomination for or elected Branch Delegates.

Mr. Toomey seconded.

Messrs. M'Cook and Burgess supported.

Motion put and lost.

MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT NOT TO HOLD PAID OFFICE.

Mr. Burgess moved—

That no member of Parliament hold any paid office in the A.W.U.

Mr. Cook seconded.

Carried unanimously.

SHED HANDS' WAGES.

Mr. M'Cook moved—

That shearing members of the A.W.U. be instructed to assist shed hands to maintain the Union rate of wages, namely, 2s. per week with rations.

Mr. Gilbert seconded *pro forma*.

Mr. Burgess supported the proposal in the interests of those who were being forced to accept day labor at starvation wages.

The President pointed out that the question of laborers' wages had been dealt with in the manifesto issued to members generally, including shed hands.

The General Secretary considered that they might do something for the laborers, as the manifesto gave power to Branches to maintain Union rates where deemed possible.

The Chairman's ruling was asked as to whether the manifesto agreed to that morning included shed hands as well as shearers.

The President stated that the manifesto applied equally to all members of the A.W.U., and that every Branch had the power to decide whether to maintain the Union rates for both shearers and shed hands or not.

COMMISSION TO SHED REPRESENTATIVES.

Mr. Temple moved—

That commission to Shed Representatives be reduced to a maximum of 5 per cent. Branches to have the power to allow none or any less sum than 5 per cent.

Motion carried on division.

For—

Mr. Temple
Toomey
M'Cook
Cook
M'Inerney
Reid

Against—

Mr. M'Carthy
Burgess
Gilbert

"THE WORKER."

Mr. M'Cook moved—

That the resolution passed in regard to the WORKER be re-opened.

He considered that both in regard to the Union as a whole and as affecting his Branch, which would lose the value of the asset if the WORKER was closed, the question was a most important one.

The President pointed out that the importance of the subject was so great that he would prefer to see it re-opened rather than be called upon to deal with the point of order foreshadowed by Mr. M'Cook.

The motion was carried, and the original motion was again opened for discussion.

Mr. Burgess moved as an amendment—

That this Conference urges upon the WORKER Trustees the necessity of immediate retrenchment in WORKER management.

Mr. M'Cook seconded. The amendment was one which would do no harm, although he did not think it would effect very much good. At the same time he admitted that there was room for retrenchment.

Mr. Gilbert opposed the amendment, as he held that we could not afford to maintain the journal for a year while members were being appealed to by the proposed plebiscite.

The General Secretary desired to lay before the delegates some facts that had been overlooked. For one thing, the Manager had been promised an immediate notification of the decision of Conference, and as there was no provision yet made for paying off the liabilities of Branches on last year's WORKER account, there were no means for carrying it on, and the Manager could be held responsible for debts he might incur. If the original motion was again carried, and the Manager informed of the fact, he would refuse to take further advertisements, and must at once prepare to shut down. The recommendation to the WORKER Trustees was, in fact, a mandatory one, because if carried, no provision would be made by Conference for the current year's sustentation, and the paper would be killed at once. Were they prepared for this? He (Mr. Spence) would not mention other contingencies which had been referred to or hinted at, but asked delegates whether in face of their decision to keep all branches open they could consistently act so as to destroy the WORKER, in opposition to the very large majority of members who had expressed confidence in its present editorship and management?

The President stated that he had not spoken on the question when last before them. He then stated fairly the financial position. Personally, he was not altogether satisfied with the WORKER. He thought that it had often contained contentious matters which, in the interests of Labor, would have been better omitted. Then, again, the paper was not sufficiently bright and readable to suit the ordinary bushman. He believed that if suggestions were courteously made to the Editor, pointing out means by which the WORKER might be made more entertaining, he would adopt them. He pointed out that it was very different to express dissatisfaction with the reading matter in the WORKER—in which he largely agreed with the views of some of those who supported the motion—and to close it altogether. At the present time they desired to strengthen their power of organization, and to shut up the WORKER would tend to considerably weaken their ability to cope with the forces at present working against them. Of course, he had no vote, but if he had one he would certainly vote against the motion to close the WORKER, as that was what the resolution virtually meant.

Mr. Toomey opposed the amendment. He recognized that Conference could not close the WORKER, but he thought that they should make what recommendations they chose. The management and the editorial conduct of the WORKER were two distinct things, and if it were open to him to discuss the editorial policy, he would have a good deal to say on that point, but, as it was, he could not refer to that aspect of the question.

Mr. Rae: You can criticise the editorial policy as much as you like.

Mr. Toomey: He did not think he could, but, if so, he would say that he thoroughly disagreed with the present way in which the WORKER was conducted, and was opposed to the editorial policy.

Mr. Rae: You always have been.

Mr. Toomey said he never had supported the WORKER. He did not believe in it. At the present time it is full of economic and social stuff which he knew all about years ago, and he for one could learn nothing from it. In conclusion, he would remind them of the great expense of keeping it going, and of the fact that only city men got a living on its staff, while Branch officials, who had been in the Union for years, were much worse paid. He trusted that the original motion would be again carried, and that Conference would not turn round and make itself ridiculous by deciding one way yesterday and the opposite way to-day.

The question was then submitted to the vote of Conference.

For the Amendment—

Mr. M'Cook
Reid
Burgess
Temple
M'Inerney

Against—

Mr. M'Carthy
Cook
Gilbert
Toomey

PARLIAMENTARY LABOR PARTY.

Mr. M'Carthy then moved—

That this Conference requests the Trustees to have a report of the Parliamentary Labor Party's actions in the House placed in the WORKER for the benefit of members.

Carried.

"WORKER" SUSTENTATION.

Mr. Toomey moved—

That the sustentation fee for WORKER for 1896 be 1s. per member on the 1895 membership of the New South Wales Branches at the end of that year.

Mr. Gilbert seconded.

The motion was carried without dissent.

NUMBER OF FINANCIAL MEMBERS.

Number of financial members of New South Wales Branches for 1895 at end of that year:—

Young	4019
Scone	1098
Coonamble	2788
Bourke	4000
Wagga	2784
Moree	1678
Goulburn	682
Total	16,999

"THE WORKER."

Moved and seconded—

That the Conference approve the scheme laid down in the report of the WORKER Board of Control for the future guidance of the venture, with the exception of clause 6 relating to the plebiscite of membership on the question of editorship, which had been disposed of during the past year.

Carried.

The following rules for the management of the WORKER newspaper were adopted:—

1. That monthly meetings of the Board shall be held at the Head Office of the A.W.U., all correspondence duly recorded and minutes of all meetings kept by the General Secretary, and a summary supplied each month to each Trustee.
2. That all wages be paid weekly, and a statement of same be presented at each monthly meeting. All other accounts to be passed by the Board before payment.
3. That no new hands be employed, with the exception of compositors, nor the wages of those employed be altered without the consent of the Board. No permanent addition to the plant and furniture in the office to be made without like authority.
4. That every effort be made to increase the city circulation of the WORKER, increase the advertising business, and reduce expenditure.
5. That the WORKER business shall continue to be run in strict accordance with the rules of the Typographical Association.
6. That no new work which may be likely to involve the A.W.U. in pecuniary responsibility or affect its reputation be undertaken by the Manager until he has first obtained the sanction of the Board of Control.
7. That the Board of Control be authorized to take any further steps in accordance with the original scheme and the foregoing proposals to increase the influence and value of the WORKER.

All other motions dealing with WORKER Board of Management were then withdrawn.

UNIFORM P.L.L. AND A.W.U. CARDS OF MEMBERSHIP.

Correspondence was read by the General Secretary from Mr. T. Routley, General Secretary of the New South Wales Political Labor League, asking for consideration of the proposal to adopt a uniform card of membership, to include all members of both the Political Labor League and the New South Wales Branches of the A.W.U., to be issued at 1s. each, of which 6d. should go to the Branches issuing same and 6d. to the support of the Political Labor League Executive.

The President asked that the Conference should come to a definite understanding as to what amounts the various Branches should contribute for political purposes. He thought the present want of uniformity gave it into the power of Branches to vote any sum up to 1s. per member, but they could vote any less sum, and it might happen that if a Branch favored the selected candidates they would vote the full amount of 1s., but that if the Branch felt any objection to the person chosen they might vote any less sum, perhaps only one penny per member, and this was not a proper position in which to leave the matter, as non-members who joined the Political Labor League depended upon the subsidy of 1s. from the A.W.U.

PARLIAMENTARY FUND.

Mr. Toomey moved—

That 1s. per member be set aside by each New South Wales Branch to the Parliamentary Fund.

Mr. Burgess seconded the motion.

Mr. M'Cook gave notice of an amendment dealing with the application of the fund. His object was to prevent the Parliamentary Fund from being used in the case of non-contested elections.

The President made a lengthy statement concerning the way in which unopposed members had to incur considerable expense before they could possibly know whether they were to receive opposition or not. He detailed the position in which he was placed as a candidate for the Wilcannia seat, and stated that he dated the opposition of the Bourke Branch from the year 1894, when the trouble arose over the pledge. He (Mr. Sleath) never got the money to which his electorate was entitled in 1894 until just before the election was held. If he had been willing to back down and refuse to sign the pledge,

he could have got the money any time. But, as it was, he was compelled to spend his own money, and only received £50 out of the £75 which he understood was available. He considered that the present position left too much power in the hands of one or two Branch officers, and his own case was one in point.

Mr. Macdonell asked permission to say a few words in reply to the statements of the President concerning the Bourke Branch Parliamentary Fund.

The President refused permission, and the discussion ended.

UNIFORM P.L.L. AND A.W.U. CARDS OF MEMBERSHIP.

Mr. Toomey moved—

That the proposal conveyed in the letter of the General Secretary, Political Labor League, re uniform cards, be approved.

Mr. Gilbert seconded.

After discussion, it was resolved—

That, while not recognizing the proposed cards as tickets of membership, the A.W.U. Branches in New South Wales be recommended to procure supplies of them and dispose of such cards to all members of the Political Labor League, whether A.W.U. members or not, leaving different electorate branches of the Political Labor League to fix any further fee for local purposes, within the limit of the rule, as they might deem advisable.

Mr. M'Cook objected to any plan which would allow branches of the Political Labor League to be packed in the interests of a possibly objectionable man, and then be able to draw upon the A.W.U. Parliamentary Fund without the Branch having the power of veto.

The President thought this could be provided for by a rule that any dispute should be submitted to the arbitration of an impartial tribunal, both parties to be bound by the award. What he objected was (to refer to his own dispute) one of the parties to the dispute sitting in judgment upon its own case, as the Bourke Branch Committee had done.

PARLIAMENTARY FUND.

Mr. Gilbert considered that the Parliamentary Fund should be pooled, and all approved Labor candidates within the different Branches of the A.W.U. should receive equal portions of the fund. As an amalgamated body, the A.W.U. should not favor any Branch or any individual because he happened to be in a large Branch.

The President opposed this view, as he considered that in small Branches where the population was denser than in the larger Branches, and the majority of the workers were outside the A.W.U., there should be a larger enrolment of outsiders in the local Leagues, so that the smaller amount derived from the A.W.U. fund could be supplemented by subscriptions from the larger number of outside workers.

TWELFTH DAY—THURSDAY, FEB. 13.

Conference re-assembled at 10 a.m., all delegates present. Minutes of previous day's proceedings read and confirmed.

HONORARY DELEGATES.

Mr. M'Inerney moved—

That Branches have power to appoint Honorary Delegates, with authority to issue tickets on any Branch and within the territory of any Branch. He said that if some such system was not adopted, the Goulburn Branch was so hampered in the work of organization that Conference had better wipe it out.

Motion lapsed for want of a seconder.

TICKETS FOR 1896.

Mr. M'Cook moved—

That tickets for 1896 be issued for 10s. to all members who obtained no shearing work during the 1895 season. Such tickets to be issued only by Secretaries on a statutory declaration.

Mr. M'Inerney seconded.

Mr. Burgess supported.

Mr. Temple moved as an amendment—

That all unfinancial members receive tickets for the current year for 10s. He considered that there were many who had little or no work either last year or in 1894, and that it was advisable to make some concession to bring them within our ranks.

Mr. Burgess strongly opposed the amendment, which would, in his opinion, work most unjustly to good members, who were already disgusted with the license allowed to scabs.

Mr. Gilbert supported for the sake of increasing the membership.

The amendment was then put and lost on division.

For—	Against—
Mr. M'Cook	Mr. Gilbert
Burgess	Temple
Toomey	Reid
M'Carthy	Cook
M'Inerney	

The original motion was then put and carried. The same members voting for the resolution as were opposed to the amendment.

REVISION OF RULES.

Motions for revision of the Rules were withdrawn on the understanding that the Rules would be revised in accordance with the alterations made by Conference.

TRAVELLING AGENTS.

Mr. Temple moved—

That Branches be advised to appoint Travelling Agents for organizing purposes during the current season.

Mr. M'Inerney moved—

That there be added, "salaries of Travelling Organizers not to exceed £4 per week."

Mr. M'Carthy seconded.

For the proposed addition—salary not to exceed £4 weekly.

For—	Against—
Mr. M'Inerney	Mr. Toomey
M'Carthy	M'Cook
Temple	Cook
Gilbert	
Reid	
Burgess	

The motion as amended was carried without dissent.

CHARGES AGAINST SECRETARIES.

A motion from Bendine Shed was moved by Mr. Toomey, to the effect that the charge against the Secretaries of Wagga and Goulburn Branches, of having advised members during 1895 to buy their own shearing machines, should be dealt with by Conference.

Explanations were made by Messrs. M'Inerney, Spence, and M'Cook, and correspondence bearing on the subject was read by the Chairman.

Mr. M'Cook moved—

That in the opinion of this Conference no instructions were issued by Secretary Smith, of Wagga Branch, nor Secretary M'Inerney, of Goulburn Branch, to anyone at Redbank Shed empowering shearers to buy machines during the 1895 shearing season.

The motion was unanimously carried.

POLITICAL TICKETS.

A suggestion that the membership tickets for 1897 have affixed to them a voting section for political purposes at the opposite end to the butts, and that separate political tickets be discontinued after the present year, was carried unanimously.

COLOR OF 1897 CERTIFICATES.

On the motion of Mr. Toomey, it was resolved—

That the color of 1897 tickets be trian, and that the price be printed in the body of the ticket.

Proposals that the color be blue, by Mr. Gilbert, and yellow, by Mr. Burgess, were not entertained.

PRISONERS' RELIEF FUND.

Mr. J. A. Cook moved—

That donations to the Prisoners' Relief Fund by the various Branches be pooled, and the President and General Secretary arrange for the proper distribution of the fund on a *pro rata* basis among all prisoners on their release.

It was unanimously resolved that the separate Branch collections should be pooled as one fund.

The President suggested that the plan adopted in Queensland, of keeping the fund open and having a standing request in the WORKER for contributions to the fund until the whole of the prisoners were released, should be adopted.

Some discussion ensued as to the best way to ascertain the names and particulars of all who were entitled to a share of the fund, and it was agreed that Branch Secretaries forward such particulars to the General Secretary.

Mr. Cook added to his motion the suggestion that the Queensland procedure be adopted, and a further appeal for assistance made during the current season, the Executive officers to arrange details.

The motion was then carried without dissent.

FREE PASSES AND MINERS' RIGHTS TO UNEMPLOYED.

Mr. Burgess moved a resolution regarding the issue of free passes and miners' rights to unemployed sent into the country as fossickers, which, after discussion by the President and Messrs. M'Cook and Spence, was defeated.

THE LABOR BUREAU.

Mr. M'Cook then moved the following resolution, which was seconded by Mr. Toomey, and carried unanimously—

This Conference of the Australian Workers' Union is of opinion that the New South Wales Labor Bureau is inimical to the best interests both of the workers and the unemployed, and is a State-subsidised agency for the reduction of wages for the benefit of employers at the expense of the whole community. We are furthermore of opinion that the proposal to establish branches of the Bureau in various centres throughout the country will but serve to intensify the evils complained of, and that it should, therefore, be abolished immediately.

SALARIES OF OFFICERS.

Mr. Toomey moved—

That the General Returning-officer's fee be five guineas.

Seconded.

Mr. Gilbert moved, Mr. M'Cook seconded, as an amendment—

That the fee be two guineas.

The amendment was carried.

Delegates' fees were fixed, as previously, at 15s. per day and second class rail fare. The General Treasurer's fee was fixed at two guineas.

It was moved—

That the General Secretary's salary be fixed at £300 per annum.

An amendment that the salary be £250 per annum was moved and carried.

TRUSTEES FOR 1896.

Messrs. Toomey, M'Inerney, and Rae were elected as Trustees for the year.

STRIKE ACCOUNTS—YOUNG AND CRESWICK BRANCHES.

It was agreed that the whole of the liabilities over strike accounts incurred at camps and sheds on the border between Young and Creswick Branches, be pooled and jointly discharged.

TRANSFER OF BRANCH TERRITORY.

Mr. Temple agreed, on behalf of the Creswick Branch, to meet the New South Wales Branches concerned, and arrange mutually to transfer to them a portion of the territory held by his Branch in New South Wales.

On the suggestion of Mr. Rae, the offer of Mr. Temple was accepted, and ordered to be entered on the minutes of Conference.

SUSTENTATION FEE FOR HEAD OFFICE.

Mr. M'Carthy moved, and Mr. M'Cook seconded—

That the sustentation fee for the maintenance of the Head Office be at the rate of ninepence per financial member on the 1895 membership as at the end of that year.

Carried unanimously.

YOUNG BRANCH MEMBERS' ROLL.

Mr. Toomey asked for instructions *re* the printing of last year's members' rolls for Young Branch.

On the motion of Mr. Gilbert, it was resolved that Young Branch be not required to publish last year's members' roll.

VOTE OF THANKS TO PRESIDENT.

Mr. M'Carthy moved a hearty vote of thanks to the President for presiding so ably over the Conference. He was sure that every delegate had received the utmost latitude and fair play, and he hoped the President would be able to visit Moree as well as other Branches during the coming year, and assist them to regain their former strength.

Mr. Cook seconded the motion, and expressed the opinion that at no previous Conference had they got on so well or with so little contention or ill-feeling, and he asked them to carry the motion by acclamation.

The President briefly thanked them, and said that although the Conference had opened with a dispute of a very unpleasant nature between himself and Bourke Branch, that dispute would in no way prevent him from doing his duty as President, and assisting to the utmost of his power in the work of re-organization.

UNION PRISONERS.

A resolution of congratulation to those Union prisoners who had been released, and of heart-felt sympathy with those who were still suffering imprisonment, was carried unanimously on the motion of Mr. M'Inerney.

The General Secretary read the minutes of the day's proceedings, which were adopted. The President then thanked members for their attention to business, and wished them a pleasant and prosperous year, and declared the Conference closed.



BALLOT "C"—QUESTIONS.

The following General Questions were submitted by authority of Convention and Executive Council:—

1. Are you in favor of adopting the new Constitution, to include the Queensland A.W.U. and the increase of Contributions of Shearing Members to the same rate as now paid by our Queensland brethren, namely, £1 per annum; such increased Contribution only to take effect for 1897?
2. Are you in favor of a portion of such increased Contributions being used for the purpose of establishing Co-operative Land Settlements for the employment of members, in accordance with a Scheme to be submitted by the Executive to next Annual Conference?
3. Are you in favor of Shearing under same conditions as to Agreements for 1896 as in present year?
4. In the event of the Pastoralists' Union not coming to an amicable settlement with the A. W. U. before next Annual Conference, are you in favor of the Union framing and enforcing its own Agreement for next Shearing Season?
5. Are you in favor of the Salary paid to any Branch Secretary not exceeding £175 per year; or not exceeding £200, as at present?

6. Are you in favor of Mr. J. Medway Day, the present Editor of the New South Wales Worker, retaining that position?

	No. 1.		No. 2.		No. 3.		No. 4.		No. 5.		No. 6.	
	Yes.	No.	Yes.	No.	Yes.	No.	Yes.	No.	For £175.	For £200.	Yes.	No.
WAGGA ..	164	496	177	497	286	31	425	131	503	131	428	46
YOUNG ..	269	498	303	451	400	355	472	278	562	191	608	116
MOREE ..	108	125	127	107	135	89	123	101	152	75	190	46
SCONE ..	61	188	84	161	154	91	120	123	119	128	200	42
ADELAIDE ..	103	93	88	104	84	99	109	71	137	55	688	46
COONAMBLE ..	330	448	369	399	380	377	488	277	559	209	907	76
BOURKE ..	655	407	514	460	372	662	748	287	700	321	907	76
GOULBURN ..	40	56	35	90	76	42	77	40	103	16	115	7
CASTERTON ..	15	71	18	69	52	6	33	53	81	6	..	..
CRESWICK ..	118	382	96	365	336	145	205	271	394	46	..	..
PORT AUGUSTA ..	22	42	32	32	18	45	45	17	56	2	..	..
	1885	2835	1843	2717	2323	2272	2845	1649	3366	1160	3136	379
INFORMAL ..	..	41	60	..	70	..	69	..	72	..	141	..

BALLOT "E"—EXECUTIVE OFFICERS.

PRESIDENT.

	SLEATH.	RAE.
WAGGA ..	303	366
YOUNG ..	697	274
MOREE ..	57	171
SCONE ..	130	139
ADELAIDE ..	208	65
COONAMBLE ..	417	360
BOURKE ..	727	387
GOULBURN ..	56	75
CASTERTON ..	68	46
CRESWICK ..	391	164
SYDNEY ..	0	2
PORT AUGUSTA ..	48	18
	3102	2067

VICE-PRESIDENT FOR NEW SOUTH WALES.

	WHITE.	M'INERNEY.	TOOMEY.	STOPPELBEIN.
WAGGA ..	76	348	103	99
YOUNG ..	195	261	497	52
MOREE ..	78	55	87	9
SCONE ..	57	93	110	11
SYDNEY ..	2	..	..	..
COONAMBLE ..	298	186	223	48
BOURKE ..	693	187	149	52
GOULBURN ..	15	113	4	..
	1414	1183	1173	271

VICE-PRESIDENT FOR VICTORIA.

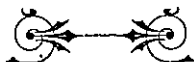
J. SLATTERY (unopposed).

GENERAL TREASURER.

	TEMPLE.	DAY.
WAGGA ..	254	408
YOUNG ..	572	401
MOREE ..	128	101
SCONE ..	178	92
ADELAIDE ..	121	146
COONAMBLE ..	403	362
BOURKE ..	515	598
GOULBURN ..	53	78
CASTERTON ..	74	39
CRESWICK ..	396	168
SYDNEY ..	..	2
PORT AUGUSTA ..	47	18
	2741	2413

GENERAL SECRETARY.

	SPENCE.	NEILSEN.
WAGGA	578	83
YOUNG	496	475
MOREE	197	33
SCONE	224	47
ADELAIDE	233	35
COONAMBLE	595	168
BOURKE	905	216
GOULBURN	102	31
CASTERTON	100	13
CRESWICK	439	123
SYDNEY	2	..
PORT AUGUSTA	48	16
	3919	1240



STATEMENT SHOWING ASSETS AND LIABILITIES,
DECEMBER 31, 1895.

	ASSETS.	LIABILITIES.
HEAD OFFICE	£175 6 1	£185 10 4
CRESWICK BRANCH	379 14 10	756 8 9
BOURKE BRANCH	1253 17 1	15 0 0
WAGGA BRANCH	1635 12 7	51 15 2
YOUNG BRANCH	300 8 9	322 6 6
COONAMBLE BRANCH	757 10 2	95 1 5
CASTERTON BRANCH	32 15 6	157 7 0
ADELAIDE BRANCH	363 19 6	145 0 0
SCONE BRANCH	536 5 2	0 0 0
MOREE BRANCH	205 18 9	105 5 0
PORT AUGUSTA BRANCH	0 18 10	94 16 7
GOULBURN BRANCH	165 14 7	3 6
SYDNEY BRANCH	7 19 9	6 11 0
	£5816 1 7	£1952 5 3

Excess of Assets over Liabilities £3863 16s. 4d.

N.B.—In above Statement no deductions are made, and it is only fair to refer to the fact that cross items between Offices, amounting to £111 12s., are included on both sides Thus, taking the A.W.U. as a whole, the totals would aggregate less by that amount Bourke Branch Balance-sheet shows £300 Worker Sustentation as a liability, but, as other Branches have not done so, I have left it out.

W. G. SPENCE

General Secretary.

Head Office, Sydney,
February, 1896,

Australian Workers' Union.

— HEAD OFFICE. —

STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS AND EXPENDITURE FOR YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 1895.

RECEIPTS.				EXPENDITURE.			
	£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.
To Balance Last Audit			16	7	1		
Branch Remittances	2543	15	0				
Sale of Tickets		5	15	0			
Sale of Safe		20	0	0			
Sale of Directories		10	10	0			
			2580		0	0	
			£2596		7	1	
By Cash Advances			986	0	0		
Salaries			644	5	8		
Delegates' Expenses			135	6	11		
Printing, Advertising, and Stationery ..			421	15	3		
Postage, Telegrams, Exchange, and Petty Cash			41	14	8		
Conference Expenses			7	17	0		
Refunds on Tickets to Branches			5	15	0		
Audit Fees			40	10	0		
Rent			45	9	4		
Freight			5	16	0		
Office Furniture			10	5	2		
Agents' Wages			23	5	0		
Prize, Wet Wool Tester			35	0	0		
Strike Expenses			20	0	0		
Cleaning Office			3	17	6		
Directories			21	0	0		
Legal Charges			6	6	0		
Newspapers Subs.			2	17	6		
			2457		1	0	
Balance in Bank			143	8	7		
Less Unpresented Cheques—No. 55, £2 5s.; No. 56, £1 17s. 6d. ..			4	2	6		
			139		6	1	
			£2596		7	1	

January 24, 1896.

Audited and found correct—

E. W. FOXALL, }
JOHN RAMSAY, } AUDITORS.

DETAILED STATEMENT of RECEIPTS and EXPENDITURE for YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 1895.

RECEIPTS.				EXPENDITURE.			
	£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.
To Balance last Audit			16	7	1		
Branch Remittances—							
Bourke	780	0	0				
Wagga	741	17	6				
Coonamble	390	0	0				
Scone	355	0	0				
Goulburn	160	0	0				
Adelaide	76	17	6				
Young	30	0	0				
Moree	10	0	0				
			2543		15	0	
Sale of Directories—							
Bourke	2	12	6				
Goulburn	2	12	6				
Scone	2	12	6				
Coonamble	2	12	6				
			10		10	0	
Sale of Tickets for Branches—							
Wagga	0	10	0				
Scone	0	10	0				
Coonamble	0	15	0				
Young	0	10	0				
Moree	0	10	0				
Creswick	0	15	0				
Bourke	2	5	0				
			5		15	0	
Sale of Safe			20	0	0		
			£2596		7	1	
By Cash Advances—							
Young	500	0	0				
Casterton	190	0	0				
WORKER (N.S.W.)	287	0	0				
			986		0	0	
Salaries—							
General Treasurer, 1893-4	4	4	0				
General Secretary, 1894	173	8	4				
" " 1895	300	0	0				
General Organizer	166	13	4				
			644		5	8	
Delegates' Expenses—							
C. Poynton, 1894	19	11	11				
A. Poynton, 1894	23	5	0				
T. H. Williams, 1894	10	0	0				
W. G. Spence (Fares only)	12	2	11				
A. Rae (Fares only)	55	3	1				
J. Slattery	10	4	0				
J. M. Toomey	5	0	0				
			135		6	11	
Printing, Advertising, and Stationery—							
Rider and Mercer, 1894	10	15	6				
Andrew and Taylor, 1891-4	268	11	9				
" " 1895	11	10	6				
WORKER (N.S.W.)	72	8	3				
" (Victoria)	45	14	3				
Australian Workman, 1894	2	15	0				
Woman's Voice	3	15	0				
Socialist	2	0	0				
Age	1	19	0				
Border Post	0	15	0				
Albury Banner	0	7	6				
Daily Post	0	16	0				
Stationery	0	7	6				
			421		15	3	
Audit Fees—							
Special Audit, 1894	34	4	0				
Ordinary " 1895	6	6	0				
			40		10	0	
Conference Expenses—							
Rent	5	15	0				
Caretaker	2	2	0				
			7		17	0	
Rent, Trades Hall, Sydney	0	16	0				
" Office, Creswick, One Year (1894) ..	10	0	0				
" " Sydney, 8 Months (1895)	34	13	4				
			45		9	4	
Agents' Wages—							
Head, 1894	14	5	0				
De Petrie, 1893	5	0	0				
Rowlands, 1894	4	0	0				
			23		5	0	
Refunds on Tickets Sold—							
Wagga	0	10	0				
Scone	0	10	0				
Coonamble	0	15	0				
Young	0	10	0				
Moree	0	10	0				
Creswick	0	15	0				
Bourke	2	5	0				
			5		15	0	
Postage Account—							
Letters	13	7	8				
Packets	6	4	4				
Telegrams	10	0	4				
Exchange	6	6	5				
Petty Cash	5	15	11				
			41		14	8	
Newspapers—							
Age and Telegraph	1	6	0				
Woman's Voice	0	4	0				
Elector	0	4	0				
Single Tax	0	1	0				
Beacon	0	2	6				
Pastoralists' Review	1	0	0				
			2		17	6	
Office Furniture			10	5	2		
Freight			5	16	0		
Wet Wool Tester			35	0	0		
Strike Expenses, 1894, on A/c.			20	0	0		
Pastoral Directories			21	0	0		
Legal Charges			6	6	0		
Cleaning Office			3	17	6		
Balance in Bank of N.S.W.	143	8	7				
Less Unpresented Cheques, Nos. 55 & 56	4	2	6				
			139		6	1	
			£2596		7	1	

Socialist	2 0 0		
Age	1 19 0		
Border Post	0 15 0		
Albury Banner	0 7 6		
Daily Post	0 16 0		
Stationery	0 7 6		
			421 15 3
Audit Fees—			
Special Audit, 1894	34 4 0		
Ordinary „ 1895	6 6 0		
			40 10 0
Conference Expenses—			
Rent	5 15 0		
Caretaker	2 2 0		
			7 17 0
Rent, Trades Hall, Sydney	0 16 0		
„ Office, Creswick, One Year (1894)	10 0 0		
„ „ Sydney, 8 Months (1895)	34 13 4		
			45 9 4
Agents' Wages—			
Head, 1894	14 5 0		
De Petrie, 1893	5 0 0		
Rowlands, 1894	4 0 0		
			23 5 0
Refunds on Tickets Sold—			
Wagga	0 10 0		
Scone	0 10 0		
Coonamble	0 15 0		
Young	0 10 0		
Moree	0 10 0		
Creswick	0 15 0		
Bourke	2 5 0		
			5 15 0
Postage Account—			
Letters	13 7 8		
Packets	6 4 4		
Telegrams	10 0 4		
Exchange	6 6 5		
Petty Cash	5 15 11		
			41 14 8
Newspapers—			
Age and Telegraph	1 6 0		
Woman's Voice	0 4 0		
Elector	0 4 0		
Single Tax	0 1 0		
Beacon	0 2 6		
Pastoralists' Review	1 0 0		
			2 17 6
Office Furniture			10 5 2
Freight			5 16 0
Wet Wool Tester			35 0 0
Strike Expenses, 1894, on A/c.			20 0 0
Pastoral Directories			21 0 0
Legal Charges			6 6 0
Cleaning Office			3 17 6
Balance in Bank of N.S.W.	143 8 7		
Less Unpresented Cheques, Nos. 55 & 56	4 2 6		
			139 6 1
			<u>£2596 7 1</u>

£2596 7 1

£2596 7 1

Statement of Assets and Liabilities, December 31, 1895.

ASSETS.		LIABILITIES.	
	£ s. d.		£ s. d.
Balance in Bank	139 6 1	Creswick Branch	91 17 0
Creswick Branch, on Account of Advance by Wagga	13 2 6	New Zealand Workers' Union, Strike Expenses, 1894	42 13 4
for Directory	2 12 6	D. Temple	23 15 0
Young Branch, for Directory	2 12 6	Balance of Prize, Wet Wool Tester	15 0 0
Casterton Branch, for Directory	2 12 6	WORKER, N.S.W.	4 18 0
Furniture, &c.	15 0 0	Legal Expenses	7 7 0
Excess of Liabilities over Assets	10 4 3		
	<u>£185 10 4</u>		<u>£185 10 4</u>

Sydney, January, 1896.

W. G. SPENCE, GENERAL SECRETARY.

Statement Showing Actual Expenditure of Head Office for Year Ending December 31, 1895.

By Salaries	466 13 4
Delegates' Expenses	82 10 0
Printing, Advertising, and Stationery	131 17 0
Audit Fees	6 6 0
Rent	35 9 4
Conference Expenses	7 17 0
Postage Account	41 14 8
Newspaper Subs.	2 17 6
Office Furniture	10 5 2
Freight	5 16 0
Pastoral Directory	2 12 6
Legal Expenses	6 6 0
Cleaning Office	3 17 6
	<u>£804 2 0</u>

Sydney, January, 1896.

W. G. SPENCE, GENERAL SECRETARY.

— SYDNEY BRANCH. —

STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS AND EXPENDITURE FOR PERIOD ENDING DECEMBER 31, 1895.

RECEIPTS.		EXPENDITURE.	
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
To Tickets Sold—		By Postage	0 17 3
4 Quarterly at 3s.	0 12 0	Ticket to Olsen, Union Prisoner	0 10 0
28 Half-yearly at 5s.	5 15 0		
2 1895 at 15s.	1 10 0	Balance in Hand	1 7 3
1 „ „ 10s.	0 10 0		7 19 9
2 1896 at 10s.	1 0 0		
	<u>£9 7 0</u>		<u>£9 7 0</u>

Audited and found correct

March 17, 1896.

E. W. FOXALL, }
JOHN RAMSAY, } AUDITORS.

AUSTRALIAN WORKERS' UNION.

Summarised Statement of Receipts for Year Ending December 31, 1895; Made Up from Head Office and Branch Balance Sheets.

No.		HEAD OFFICE.	CRESWICK BRANCH.	BOURKE BRANCH.	WAGGA BRANCH.	YOUNG BRANCH.	COONAMBLE BRANCH.	CASTERTON BRANCH.	ADELAIDE BRANCH.	SCONE BRANCH.	MOREE BRANCH.	PORT AUGUSTA BRANCH.	GOULBURN BRANCH.	SYDNEY BRANCH.	TOTALS.	No.
		£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	
1	Balance Last Audit	16 7 1	1159 6 1	1650 6 0	1265 15 11	309 17 1	691 4 2	12 16 10	415 17 5	817 1 0	219 10 4	89 11 11	306 0 1	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	1
2	Interest			10 13 4											6953 13 11	2
3	Contributions		753 14 0	1634 4 0	650 12 6	1106 0 0	913 0 6	190 17 6	647 0 0	411 1 1	369 10 3	104 15 0	325 0 0	9 7 0	10 13 4	3
4	" from Other Branches ..		67 15 0		38 10 0			49 0 0							7115 1 10	2
5	" Collected for Other Branches ..	5 15 0	15 0 0	43 6 6	142 5 0	111 0 0	25 10 0	0 10 0	44 14 0	7 0 0	10 0 0	0 10 0			155 15 0	4
6	Levies		5 15 0	27 10 0	6 5 0	11 15 0	27 5 0	7 0 0							410 0 6	5
7	Refunds		4 8 3	0 7 6	21 16 6		0 14 0		12 5 0	3 0 0	38 10 0	2 0 0	2 0 0		143 5 0	6
8	Fines			4 0 0			2 0 0				25 3 3	12 19 9			65 9 3	7
9	Donations		8 12 0	12 9 0											6 0 0	8
10	Sales of Shears and Goods	30 10 0	0 0 9	33 6 1	36 18 6					1 9 0					22 10 0	9
11	Remittances from Branches	2543 15 0							90 11 2			20 19 6			212 6 0	10
12	Rent				0 10 0										2543 15 0	11
13	Sundries			3 17 2			8 0 0						6 12 0		7 2 0	12
14	Prisoners' Relief Fund			31 16 7	3 10 0				62 3 0		0 10 10				12 8 0	13
15	Advances from Head Offices					2 14 6					0 10 0	1 3 0			101 17 1	14
16	Overpaid				3 0 0	509 0 0		190 0 0							699 0 0	15
17	Cash Loans		30 5 7	1 10 0	3 0 0		0 1 5		0 10 0						5 1 5	16
18	Towards WORKER Plant				47 9 3										30 5 7	17
	Totals	£2596 7 1	£2044 16 8	£3453 6 2	£2216 12 8	£2050 6 7	£1667 15 1	£450 4 4	£1273 0 7	£1239 11 1	£663 14 8	£236 19 2	£639 12 1	£9 7 0	£18,541 13 2	18

Summarised Statement of Expenditure for Year Ending December 31, 1895; Made Up from Head Office and Branch Balance Sheets.

No.		HEAD OFFICE.	CRESWICK BRANCH.	BOURKE BRANCH.	WAGGA BRANCH.	YOUNG BRANCH.	COONAMBLE BRANCH.	CASTERTON BRANCH.	ADELAIDE BRANCH.	SCONE BRANCH.	MOREE BRANCH.	PORT AUGUSTA BRANCH.	GOULBURN BRANCH.	SYDNEY BRANCH.	TOTALS.	No.
		£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	
1	Salaries	644 5 8	235 17 4	178 14 5	207 1 0	203 3 0	202 2 0	175 0 0	203 3 0	202 2 0	221 15 2	157 8 8	157 1 0	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	1
2	Clerical Assistance			61 16 5	65 0 0	47 1 8	2 3 6		1 5 0						2787 13 3	2
3	Printing, Advertising, and Stationery ..	421 15 3	93 18 0	108 14 6	78 2 6	51 6 0	136 19 7	78 5 4	108 6 8	41 5 1	74 17 0	11 11 10	46 9 9		177 6 7	3
4	Agents' Wages and Expenses	23 5 0	178 4 10	74 19 3	42 0 0	42 10 0		30 10 0	94 17 6	34 17 6	24 3 0				1256 11 6	4
5	Commission		29 4 7	27 1 10	7 5 2	65 8 9	26 17 10	9 4 3	28 3 9	24 0 0	3 19 0				545 7 1	5
6	Audit Fees	40 17 0	11 11 0	12 12 0	4 4 0	10 10 0	6 6 0	4 4 0	11 8 9	4 4 0	10 0 0	6 6 9	11 8 0		229 19 11	6
7	Delegates' Fees and Expenses	135 6 11	24 16 10	31 1 9	34 16 3	42 10 6	30 8 5	18 8 0	36 1 3	16 3 3	50 13 9	4 4 0	2 2 0		121 15 9	7
8	Postage, Telegrams, and Exchange ..	41 14 8	97 14 2	100 0 3	40 8 10	81 12 11	19 17 11	37 16 9	45 15 6	20 9 6	14 12 9	18 16 6	30 5 3		440 15 6	8
9	Legal Expenses	6 6 0	41 18 6	28 5 6	60 4 4	39 18 0	51 11 7		32 4 2						550 2 3	9
10	Political Fund			30 0 0		73 6 4								0 17 3	260 8 1	10
11	WORKER Account		60 0 0	281 1 0	160 4 0	228 15 0	139 8 6	20 0 0	30 0 0	18 9 8	20 0 0				171 16 0	11
12	Plant									42 8 0					47 9 3	12
13	Remittance to General Fund			780 0 0	755 0 0	30 0 0	300 0 0		76 17 6	355 0 0	10 0 0		36 15 3		968 11 9	13
14	Strike Expenditure	20 0 0	1082 18 0	68 16 10	6 11 5	648 0 11	28 3 0	9 8 5			23 9 9		160 0 0		47 9 3	14
15	Cash Collected—Remitted Other Branches ..	5 15 0	12 15 0	32 13 6	142 5 0	111 0 0	26 0 0	0 10 0	44 14 0	7 0 0	10 0 0	5 0 0			2556 17 6	15
16	Directories	21 0 0		2 12 6			2 12 6								1887 5 7	16
17	Refunds		6 12 6	6 6 6	4 10 0	1 15 0				2 12 6					397 12 6	17
18	Rent and Rates	51 4 4	25 3 6	38 12 6	32 15 6	68 17 11	26 3 5	30 10 6	6 0 0	1 0 0	2 0 0	0 5 0			28 17 6	18
19	Office Furniture	10 5 2	2 13 3			7 0 6									29 9 0	19
20	Literature	2 17 6		6 18 6	2 5 10				34 12 6	12 7 6	2 4 6		33 15 6		408 3 3	20
21	Carriage	5 16 0	11 4 7		1 18 0	7 19 10	6 13 0	5 11 7	5 2 9	1 13 0	0 11 6	1 13 9	0 18 5		35 1 1	21
22	Returning-officers and Scrutineers ..		2 17 10	6 5 0	3 15 0	5 0 0	10 2 6			1 1 9	4 0 0	2 2 0	1 1 0		14 17 1	22
23	Committee Expenses	2 2 0	14 5 11		7 12 6	27 12 0									49 2 5	23
24	Petty Cash and Incidental	3 17 6	13 19 1		3 15 2				22 7 11			15 18 11			36 4 4	24
25	Dishonored Cheques			5 12 7			4 15 10		4 2 2		1 3 8				89 19 3	25
26	Co-operative Work			73 13 10			8 0 0					1 12 11			35 9 11	26
27	Prisoners' Relief Fund		2 0 0	201 9 6	5 0 0	32 14 4			2 0 0		36 13 9				13 12 7	27
28	A.L.F. and T. and L. C. Sustentation ..			59 7 6	73 16 0		48 15 2		17 13 0					0 10 0	112 7 7	28
29	Cash Advances	986 0 0							7 10 0						262 6 10	29
30	"T.U.S." Shears										20 0 0				189 8 8	30
31	Prize—Wet Wool Tester	35 0 0							87 11 6			11 0 0			1006 0 0	31
32	Cash in Agents' Hands		26 7 9	65 9 2			1 17 6	18 0 0	30 14 2	44 3 0	2 12 2		5 15 0		98 11 6	32
33	Cash Balances	139 6 1	74 14 0	1168 1 4	478 2 2	224 3 11	488 19 7	11 15 6	342 9 6	384 0 1	101 6 1	0 18 10	80 14 1	7 19 9	194 18 9	33
	Totals	£2596 7 1	£2044 16 8	£3453 6 2	£2216 12 8	£2050 6 7	£1667 15 1	£450 4 4	£1273 0 7	£1239 11 1	£663 14 8	£236 19 2	£639 12 1	£9 7 0	£18,541 13 2	

Head Office, Sydney, February, 1896.

W. G. SPENCE, General Secretary.